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INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

ISSUE 41

MARCH 1996

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Civilisation
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MARCH ISSUE 41

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THE SUPER PLAY EDITORIAL

from the BIG CHAIR

Our full contents listing starts just over the page

Were it possible for an office to burst with anticipation, then the *Super Play* office would have made a fair old mess over the city of Bath this past month. What with all the news heading for our shores, hardly a day passes without shrieks of excitement perforating the eardrums of innocent passers-by.

As all eyes turn to the release of the Ultra 64 – it's only a few weeks off in Japan now, remember – we've had to dig a little deeper than usual in our search for the latest SNES releases, but what an interesting bundle of import games reached our trembling hands this month… RPG connoisseurs will rejoice to hear that *Breath of Fire 2* is now available on import, while control-freaks will be anxious to get a fix of *Civilisation*, the previous PC smash. Outright insanity is alive and wildly kicking in *Parodius 3* and *Goemon 4*. Turn to our reviews section, beginning on page 32 to discover all these and more…

Elsewhere we turn to two of the most talked-about releases of the last couple of months – *Yoshi's Island* and *Diddy's Kong Quest*. Our in-depth feature dissects and devours these two fine examples of SNES platties, putting them head-to-head, explaining the relative successes and merits of each and, indeed, judging *which one is best* and why. Thank Tony very nicely for this one.

Oh, you want Ultra 64 news too? Rest assured you've come to the best place for the latest updates on the wonder machine. Our news pages are packed with the latest findings, including stacks of info on and piccies of *Killer Instinct 2*. And if that's not enough to satisfy your cravings, you're obviously a sadder man than Dale Winton.

More? Okay then. *Kirby Super Deluxe* previewed! All the regulars – Fantasy Quest, Live from Hell City plus Anime World, where we take a look at the Japanese TV shows which have become so popular, they've made it into their own video games. Let's hope the runaway success of the Power Rangers never goes this far. Oh… er. Oh dear, it already has…

Till next month!
Alison Harper
Editor

INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

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Right now, *Diddy's Kong Quest* and *Yoshi's Island* are the top two best-selling games in the UK. *Super Play* goes all scientific and comes up with the secret formula for success...

ABC: 23,657*

*We're the biggest-selling independent Nintendo mag – that's more than Total!

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BREATH OF FIRE 2

Savour the stats and revel in the pointy-hat tom-foolery that is *Breath of Fire 2*. It's the second time that a *BOF* are-pee-gee has made it onto the cover of *Super Play*. Turn to page 32 to discover whether it deserves to grace our fine front page...

page 32

page 24

ANIME WORLD SPECIAL

A massive eight page treat for anime fans this month. Meet the wealth of anime bods who've made it so big, they've achieved the cross-over to video game stardom...

ULTRA 64 PREVIEW

page 10

This is the place where we promise you more tasty tit-bits than that bloke in *Se7en* munched his way through. Today's menu includes more news on the Bulky Drive, details of *Creator*, along with a hefty side-portion of conjecturing about the UK release date of the machine. A feast awaits on page 10...

SUPER

The things we do for you – these profiles for one thing. How much the team hate having their photies taken, you will never understand. Such were the stresses of the team this month that the faintest hint of smile was hard to detect. Let's award marks out of 10 for trying...

PROFILES

Alison Harper

More a smirk of derision than a genuine attempt at happiness. "Look at this. More than a week past deadline and still half the mag to be written and I've got to sub it. Which would be okay if I wasn't suffering from terminal eyestrain and a severe headache. Pah." We'll award 5/10 for a winsome smile in the face of adversity.

Ollie Alderton

Ollie looks far too cheerful. Not even constant bombardment with the Gene single and a week of late nights in the office can wipe the smile off his face. So, that's got to be an 8/10 for a cheeky grin in the face of a Polaroid camera. Minus 1 point for faking it. He must be... look at these other sorry sights.

Tony Mott

The left eyebrow hints at an amusing weekend which has been put rapidly into perspective by the irritant that is Lisa I'Anson on Radio 1. Can't blame him for looking down really what with her wittering on and on, as he attempts to get to grips with the latest U64 news. That's 6 and a half then.

Wil Overton

Oh dear, oh dear. For such a sorry attempt at a smile, thou shalt be sentenced to make eternal cups of tea in the kitchen of hell. (Just across the office.) This portrait of doom and gloom deserves a three, and I'm being generous. Mine's a tea, white, no sugar, thanks.

It's bigger, it's beefier and it's ballsier. It's Killer Instinct 2 and it's set to appear in UK arcades in good time for the summer. Super Play welcomes you to an extended preview of Rare's latest coin-muncher.

Killer Instinct 2

Nintendo/Midway/Rare

A week in politics is, so they say, a long time. And in the dynamic world of videogames it can be even longer. On this basis we can assume that 60 weeks, yes that's 14 months, is an almost inconceivable length of time. But believe it or not, that's how long *Killer Instinct* has been riding high in the coin-op top ten – and this is since hitting the number one spot only a month after its release in December 1994. Not bad for a fresh young pup of a beat-'em-up thrust onto the market alongside the already legendary likes of the *Street Fighter* and *Mortal Kombat* series. But things move on apace and Nintendo have

Combo's back and he hasn't changed his vest.

Gladiators-style gear is all the rage once more.

EXPRESS

IT'S BACK!

Orchid, gentle as the flower she's named after, kicks in her opponents and then stamps on him.

Top up those all-important power bars for some gorier than average action.

Maya's another newie and no stranger to going under the surgeon's knife by the looks of things either.

had to build on this success with a sequel as soon as possible. After all, the release of the Ultra 64 is drawing ever closer and while there's now little doubt cast over the machine's potential, when it finally hits the streets it's going to need a solid catalogue of titles to promote it. And fashion dictates that a key element of that catalogue will have to be a solid combat title.

Rather than rely on the 64-bit machine's unrivalled polygon-processing capabilities, Rare have decided against taking a gamble on a truly 'next generation' beat-'em-up and opted instead for something which will build upon the amazing success of the first game.

On the surface the differences between *KI2* and its predecessor are patently obvious. The first game was a looker, of that there's no doubt, but if *Killer Instinct* was Kate Moss, *Killer Instinct 2* is Kate Moss's daughter who's been genetically engineered to take out all the scabby bits. The backdrops are amazing. Not only do they use pseudo 3D routines far in advance of those in the original, scrolling behind the players in perfect perspective, they're also partially interactive. Many of the background elements have been given a life of their own, so that in the heat of battle the combatants can destroy parts of the scenery and throw their opponents through walls and so on. It's largely a cosmetic touch, but one that adds an immense amount of atmosphere and solidity to the game's overall feel.

In addition the end-game animations have been changed and much improved over the so-so originals.

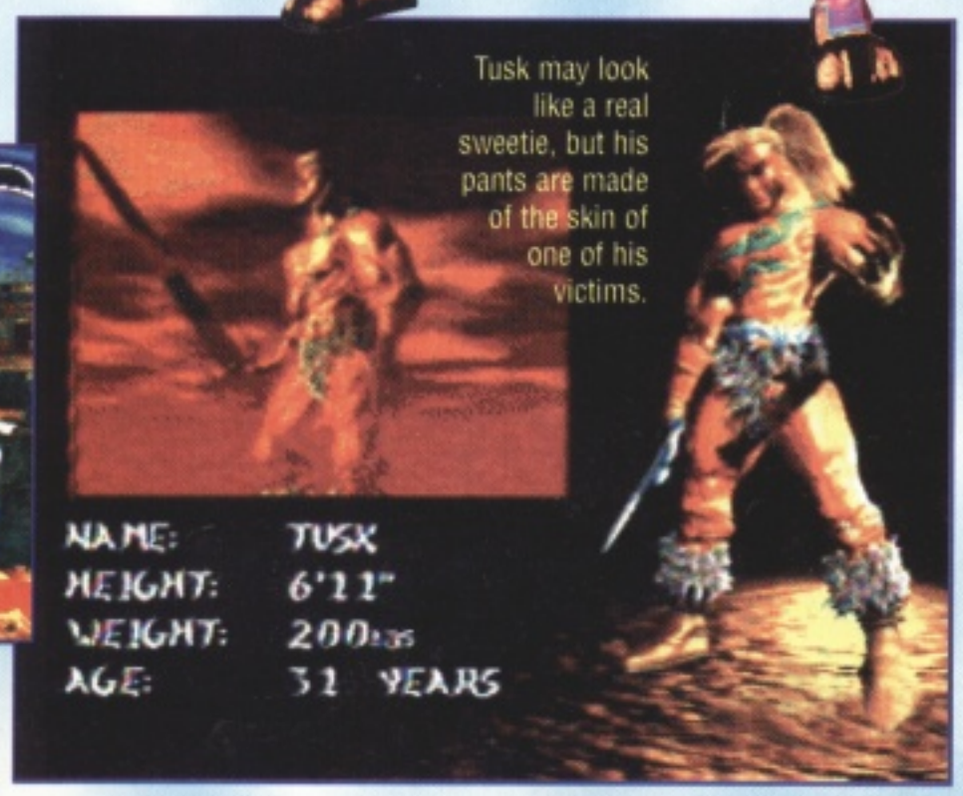
Look deeper into the new game, though, and the improvements are even more apparent. Following in the footsteps of *Mortal Kombat*, the developers of *KI2* quite rightly decided that more characters equals more fun.

As a result, there are three brand new warriors to mess around with. Many of the old favourites such as Glacius, TJ Combo and Orchid are there (and improved – check out their new moves and locations over the page) to be joined by newcomers Kim Wu, Maya, and Tusk. And in case you're wondering, Chief Thunder, Riptor and Cinder were dropped because, according to people in the know, they were the least popular characters. Sorry if you were a fan and all that, but that's democracy for you. Feeling a bit Riptor-ed off? Don't worry, there are also hidden characters for you to discover when the coin-op hits UK arcades later on in the year.

The range of combat moves has also been overhauled significantly with much of the emphasis being placed on performing combos. In fact, according to Joel Hochberg, co-chairman of the Rare Partnership, there's the potential for

Kim favours a nice line in old ladies' pop socks.

New girl Kim takes a right pasting from *Killer Instinct* old hand Jago.



Tusk may look like a real sweetie, but his pants are made of the skin of one of his victims.

"up to one million combo moves" in the game. (Which makes us super-eager to see a *full* player's guide, if someone's brave enough to do it.) To combat the onslaught of these combos you have the combo breakers, except this time they're combo-specific. This means that, if your opponent is hitting you with a certain combo, you'll have to perform your combo breaker first and follow up with the button press to correspond with your opponent's. Follow?

On the violence side there's no news yet of any Fatalities, sadly. What we are getting is a number of Ultra moves and Ultra Humiliations – the Ultras (dead nasty moves) being achievable only after maxing out the new *Samurai Shodown*-style power bar by being as aggressive as possible. And for yet more gameplay enhancement Rare are introducing throws, counter throws and the ability to dodge out of the way of your opponent à la *Fatal Fury 3*.

There are more improvements tucked away, many of which won't come to light until the machine's been out in the arcades for a few months. As you can probably already tell already, this sequel is going to be one hot cabinet when it debuts in the UK in a few months' time.

According to Rare, the Ultra 64 *Killer Instinct* title will use elements of both the first and second coin-ops, with the smart money being put on it appearing as a full-blown 3D polygon affair before Christmas. Meanwhile there's the possibility of a SNES conversion of *KI2*...

NEW VIEWS, NEW MOVES

Out go Thunder, Riptor and Cinder, in come Kim Wu, Maya and Tusk. Kim Wu is a ninja who wears a delightfully small top and some equally delightfully short shorts. Her weapons are Nunchuks and she's a girl with balls. Fireballs that is. *(Honestly, I thought we left this sort of 'humour' to our 'rivals'... – Ed)* Maya is an Amazonian who's into leopardskin. And she's pretty tasty with the set of knives she owns. Tusk is a barbarian and as well as eating with his hands and slurping his tea, his barbaric nature also manifests itself in his frantic fighting style. As well as the new range of characters in *KI2*, the old ones have been revamped with more eye-catching garb and new moves (plus new fighting locations).

These are the moves known at the time of going to press. Digest them now and be the instant champ when a spangle new *KI2* cabinet turns up at your local coin-op joint.

Key

Forward:	F
Back:	B
Down:	D
Up:	U
Down/Forward:	DF
Down/Back:	DB
Up Forward:	UF
Up Back:	UB
Quick High:	1
Medium High:	2
Fierce High:	3
Quick Low:	4
Medium Low:	5
Fierce Low:	6

Check out those backgrounds. There's no lack of attention to detail. Brill, eh?

Spinal

Stage
Spinal's rounds take place on a pirate ship, fully decked out with singing rowers, background drum beats and ships that pass by in the background.

Moves

Skele Screw	D, DF, F – 2
Flame Blade	D, DF, F – 5
Skull Scrape	D, DF, F – 6
Soul Drain	D, DF, F – 1
Teleport	D, DB, B – 4 or 5 or 6
Shield Catch	B – 1
Dart Kick	D – 6 (in the air)
Combo Breaker	D, DF, F
Grim Reaper	F, D, DF, F – 3

Jago

Stage
The action takes place on a bridge with a huge mountain in the background. There's also a waterfall in there (wonder if that'll be interactive).

Moves

Shindouken	F, D, DF – 1 or 2 or 3
(button determines height and distance)	
Wind Kick	F, D, DB – 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
Laser Sword	DF, D, DB – 3
Ninja Slide	DB, D, DF – 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
Endouken	D, DF, F – 1 or 2 or 3
Red Endouken	Hold 3 – D, DF, F – Release 3
Fake Endouken	D, DF, F – 4
Combo Breaker	F, D, DF
Ultra Combo	D, DB, B – 4

By the looks of it, Spinal doesn't appear to have lac luck shining down on him toda

Fulgore

Stage
Fulgore was made in a robot factory and this is where his stages take place. You can see the old Fulgore in the background.

Moves

Cyber Dash	B, DB, D, DF, F – 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
Plasma Shield	D, DB, B – 4
Eye Spark	DF, D, DB – 2 or 3
Laser Storm	D, DF, F –1 or 2 or 3
Teleport	D, DB, B – 4 or 5 or 6
(determines positioning after teleport)	
Invisibility	DF, D, DB – 6
(requires Super Energy)	
Super Charge	DF, D, DB – 5
Combo Breaker	F, D, DF

Sabrewulf

Stage
Takes place in old Wulfey's castle again, only this time you're in a hallway festooned with chandeliers and such like. You can also break through the wall and continue your fracas outside.

Moves

Sabre Spin	B, F – 2
Sabre Pounce	B, F – 3
Sabre Flip	B, F – 6
Power Howl	B, F – 4
(charger your Super Meter)	
Fake Howl	F, B –1
Combo Breaker	B, F
Loopy	F, DF, D, DB, B, F – 6

DF, F – 4
D, DF
DB, B – 4

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F – 6
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DF, D, DB, B,
6

Kim always wears her lucky tea-towel tucked into her belt. It's a superstitious thing.

Glacius

Stage
Glacius' scraps occur outside his ship again and the terrain is icy. We don't yet know which bits of the background our chilly chum will be able to fiddle about with.

Moves

Shoulder Rush	D, DF, F, F – 2
Liquidise	D, DF, F – 6
Ice Grip	D, DF, F – 1
Arctic Blast	D, DB, B – 1 or 2 or 3
Ice Pick	DF, D, DB – 3
Combo Breaker	D, DF, F

Orchid

Stage
Orchid rather precariously fights on the top of a roof. And for some reason there are a couple of army choppers thrumming around in the background.

Moves

Flik Flak	DF, D, DB – 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
San	DF, D, DB – 3
Air Buster	F, D, DF – 4
or 5	or 6
Tona Fire	D, DF, F – 1
or 2	or 3
Slide	B, DB, D, DF,
F	– 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
Baton Dash	D, DB, B – 2
Ultra Combo	D, DB, B – 5

TJ Combo

Stage
Something's gone horribly wrong in TJ's world because the city in the background has been laid to waste. The combat itself takes place near the subway.

Moves

TJ Combo	
TJ Tremor	B, F – 5
Spinning Fist	B, F – 1
Double Roller Coaster	B, F –2
Treble Roller Coaster	B, DB, D, DF, F – 2
Powerline	B, F – 3
Skull Crusher	B, F – 6
Cyclone	Hold 3 for three seconds and release
Fake Dizzy	D, DF, F – 4
(press any button to stop)	
Combo Breaker	B, F

Combo and Jago jig about in a manner not unsuited to an East 17 dance routine.

Kim Wu

Stage
Kim has the same kink as Orchid and likes to fight atop a roof. What is it with these girls?

Moves

Tornado Kick	DF, D, DB – 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
Firecracker	DF, D, DB – 2 or 3
Split Kick	DF, D, DB – 5 or 6
Fire Flower	D, DF, F – 1
Combo Breaker	D, F, F
Snap Dragon	D, DB, B, DB, D, DF, F

Maya

Stage
You're in the jungle and there's a Mayan pyramid in the background. The rain falls and splashes on the ground, and you can knock the leaves from the trees when you throw your opponent high in the air.

Moves

Maya Flip Kick	B, F – 5
Savage Blade	B, F – 2
Mantis	B, F – 3
Jungle Leap	B, F – 6

Oh dear. Maya, don't you know, leopard-skin attire looks resplendent on the Landlady of the Queen Vic, but stupid on you.

Cobra Bite	B, F – 1
Combo Breaker	F
Tree Cutter	F, DF, D, DB, B, F – 3

Tusk

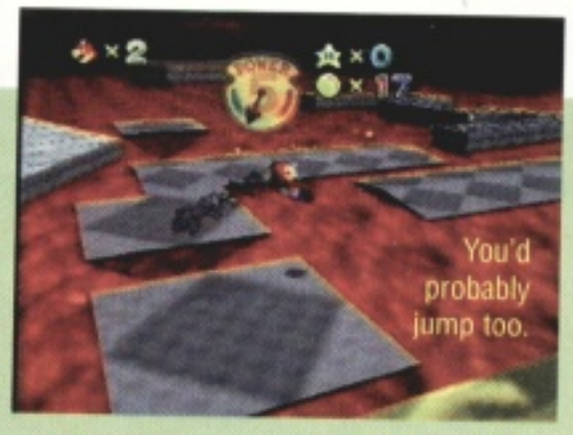
Stage
Stonehenge is the setting for Tusk's adventures in rucking. And curiously, quite unlike the real Stonehenge, there's some volcanic activity going on along with a few druids spraying graffiti on the stones (possibly).

Moves

Boot Kick	DF, D, DB – 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
Web Of Death	D, F, DF, D, DB – 5
Skull Splitter	DB, D, DF – 4 or 5 or 6
(button determines distance)	
Conquer	F, D, DF – 1 or 2 or 3
Back Stab	F, D, B – 1
Combo Breaker	F, D, DF
Destroyuss	D, DB, B, F, D, DF, F – 3

Kim braves the mighty Jago. On a bridge. Of all places!

The mighty Tusk seeks justice, probably.



ULTRA IN APRIL?

Yes, Nintendo of America president Howard Lincoln has confirmed in a recent interview that they are "shooting towards" a UK release of the 64-bit superconsole by the end of April. Previously it had been reported that Nintendo of Japan president Hiroshi Yamuchi had said that "in Europe, the machine will probably be introduced in 1997" – something which Lincoln branded a "misquote".

You may have read 'exclusive' reports elsewhere stating that the machine has been *guaranteed* a UK release in April. This 'information' came from a press release issued by Total Home Entertainment, Nintendo's distributors in the UK. What you won't have read elsewhere is that the person who issued the press release no longer has a job at THE, and that they've since said that a September release is most likely – just as *Super Play* speculated two months ago. The UK price-point, meanwhile, has been estimated by THE at £199 – something else that *Super Play* had already suggested.

Howard Lincoln. In black and white. Last.

Over in Japan, Nintendo have announced that they'll be releasing around 15 Ultra 64 titles under their own label this year, which will include the Dream Team members' games along with titles of their own such as *Zelda* and *Super Mario 64*. The proud parent of both of these, Shigeru Miyamoto, has also revealed details about SM64's origins: "This *Mario* game is a bit different to the rest of the series. We can't just call it the newest in the series because we've concentrated on searching for simple enjoyment this time. When we released the first *Super Mario* game there were some people who really enjoyed playing despite not being able to even jump over the first hole and having to finish there every time. We want the new game to retain this feeling". Hopefully this doesn't mean that the finished game will be *too* simple...

Mario's botty comes into play once again.

Aren't you fed up of screenshots from *SM64* yet? Nah, when you're tired of Mario, you're tired of life.

THE 64DD QUESTION

Last month, in an exclusively-before-every-other-mag-anywhere kind of way, we revealed the preliminary specs for the Ultra 64's 64DD, the official name given to the 'Bulky Drive'. Now we can fill you in on a few more solid details.

The unit, which sits under the 64, will use discs slightly larger – and thicker – than standard 3.5" computer floppies and each will have a capacity of 512 megabits of set game data, with a further 208 megabits being writable (which will be used for saving game positions on, along with things like new levels and character details, etc.).

Miyamoto said of the 64DD: "For us it's got enough capacity and players can put in their own data, so there's a possibility we will develop a growing game where you can look after your own data in the future... Of course we're going to develop independent games [i.e. cart- and disc-only] but we will also develop a lot of games where you'll need to use both cartridge and disc. And we expect we'll be able to make greater games using this method".

The first 64DD game is, of course, the *Zelda* update.

But will it be one of Shigs' "growing games"?

Which is both good and bad news – good because Miyamoto's magic is going to be spread over so many extra megabits (the biggest game he's been involved with so far has been *Yoshi's Island*, at 16 megabits), bad because it looks like you'll need to shell out a hefty wodge of cash if you want to play the best games for the system.

Miyamoto also cryptically revealed that, including *Super Mario 64*, his own team has been developing five Ultra titles, of which the three best will be released. A Yoshi game is rumoured to be one of the quintet, but we'll not know for definite until Nintendo are good and ready to reveal all.

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CREATING A MONSTER

Expansive as *Super Play*'s Ultra 64 report was last month, we didn't have room to tell you much about *Creator*, the game being produced by Dream Team members Software Creations. The Manchester-based outfit, whose previous credits include such gems as home computer conversions of *Bubble Bobble*, the totally ber-illiant SNES platformer *Plok!* and the sound development tools for the Ultra 64, are working on something which allows you to create your own living, breathing dinosaur and nurture it through its life overcoming the myriad life-threatening pitfalls that inevitably stand in the way.

Plok! programmer John Pickford is the project leader on the title, so we should expect it to be one of the stronger titles among the initial Ultra 64 line-up. As with all the Dream Team games, firm details are rather thin on the ground at present (Nintendo are doing a good job at keeping lips sealed at the moment), but we're hoping to have more information on this potential barnstormer next month.

Have you seen the T-Rex demo that comes bundled with Sony's PlayStation? *Creator* kicks its botty good and proper.

SCHOOL OF GAMING

When we heard of a new company in London called Cybertech Academy we suspected that it might be another of those Internet café-type arrangements frequented by the kind of sad spongs who you always try to avoid when using public transport. How wrong we were. This place isn't full of people sitting around sipping tepid, over-priced capuccinos – here you're more likely to find gamers eagerly checking out hot new videogames often months before they're due to be released on systems ranging from the SNES to the Virtual Boy to the PlayStation.

Essentially it's a credible '90s version of an after-school computer club: you get experts on hand (not Mr Jones the Maths teacher who likes to think he's a bit handy with a BBC Model B), and there's also the opportunity to compete as part of one of four teams in gaming tournament where the winners can walk off with anything from games and T-shirts to posters and other game-related merchandise.

How does it work? Well, software companies such as Acclaim, Electronic Arts and Bullfrog like to see how their titles perform with the gaming public *before* they manufacture tens of thousands of the things, and Cybertech Academy is an ideal place to test them.

It's not all games, though – if you *do* fancy a stroll down the Information Autobahn Sliproad thing, there are terminals hooked up and ready to roll, along with tuition to get you going in the right direction. There's also support for 'edutainment' software and art and design packages, and to top it all, we gather they even make a surprisingly drinkable cup of coffee.

If you're free and able to get to Brockley in South East London on Saturday 20th April for a 10am-5pm session at Cybertech Academy, you may like to enter a competition we've arranged with the friendly chaps down there. (A one-day event would normally set you back hard cash – call the Academy on 0171 6396497 for more details). We've five places to give away and all you have to do is answer the following school-related question of Movies, Games and Videos simplicity: What was the name of Tucker Jenkins' porky pal in Grange Hill? Was it: a) Benny Green, b) Alan Bennett, or c) Trisha Yates? Chuck your answer on a postcard or sealed-down envelope and send it to 'It's All Academic Really Compo' at the usual *Super Play* address. You have until March 28th to do so, and the usual compo rules apply. Good luck.

JAPAN GAME WATCH

And still the pachinko and mah jong simulators keep appearing in Japan. Just *how* many new and exciting ways are there of presenting what must rank as two of the most pedestrian game themes around? It's not important anyway – we're interested in the 'proper' games appearing Nipponside. And here comes this month's choice selection.

Since *Tetris* set the agenda all those years ago, games whose content flexes your mind as well as your manual dexterity have been appearing in Japan at a rate of around one every other month. *Clockworks* is little-known publisher Tokuma Shoten's effort. Looking a bit like oldie-but-goodie coin-op *Qix*, it has just about the most basic appearance possible, but the game itself – which is classic against-the-clock puzzling – is what counts, and it looks, well, interesting.

But not as interesting as *Ebimasaru Puzzle*, Konami's *Goemon* spin-off which ably proves that thought-intensive games need not look as dull as a Geometry student's homework. Using the same kind of computer-rendered graphics as seen briefly in *Goemon 4* (see the review this ish on page 42), this sees the little fat fellow prancing around isometric-viewed locations tripping traps and dodging odd-looking nasties as you attempt to figure out the safest route to the goal. It's a nifty little eight megabits big and will be out in March, shortly after which it'll be reviewed in these very pages.

Bomberman 4 is on the way, but, sob, it could be the last.

Doraemon in the bizarrely named *Nobita and the Moon Kingdom.*

Something not due to appear for a little while longer, though, is Hudson Soft's *Super Bomberman 4*. The big twist in part two was the fact that levels scrolled rather than being static one-screen affairs while in part three it was kangaroo-type alien animals; this one lets you use enemies as transport, apparently, and there's Something Special planned for Battle Mode games too. It's rumoured to be the last in the phenomenally successful series, incidentally, but we reckon Hudson can probably think up new ways for explosives to behave yet.

Clockworks is a challenge for all puzzle addicts...

Finally this month we have a game starring anime's arguably most notable pussycat, *Doraemon*. His fourth SNES outing, subtitled *Nobita And The Moon Kingdom*, continues with the platformy theme set out in the original, which *Super Play* reviewed all the way back in issue 10. Which proves, perhaps, that there's as much lack of inspiration in certain quarters of the Japanese gaming industry as there are across the rest of the world.

Zany? Yes. And we can't wait for *Ebimasaru* to come out.

Oh well... Roll on the Ultra 64?

IT'S... THE SUPER QUIZ

Well slap us with a an old haddock if you lot aren't a bit pump when it comes to this part of the magazine. Not one single person got all the answers right to issue 39's brain-teaser, with some wags even electing to answer just the categories they liked the look of. The closest anyone came to getting them all right was Kevin Foster of Derby, who wins copies of *Yoshi's Island* and *Diddy's Kong Quest* for proving to be the best of an underachieving bunch (check the correct answers at the foot of the page).

Now witness this month's table of teasers and see how much you *really* know about the world of the Nintendo and that. To make it even easier, for one month only, the questions take the form of statements: all you have to do is say whether each is either true or false. (Er, except for the bosses, of course – we can't make it *that* easy. Send your entries on a postcard or the back of a sealed-down envelope to 'Super Quiz 41' at the usual address.

EASY

1 Enix wrote the mega-successful *Final Fantasy* series.
2 *Killer Instinct* was produced by Capcom.
3 The Sega Saturn is an overpriced, underpowered pile of tat.

MEDIUM

1 Nintendo started out making playing cards.
2 The SNES mouse was launched with the cartridge *Mario Paint*.
3 Channel 4's Hollyoaks is groundbreaking youth television, with believable storylines, likable characters and razor-sharp scripts.

HARD

1 The CPU inside a SNES is of the 68000 series.
2 *Super Mario Kart* was the first game to use a DSP (digital signal processing) chip.
3 The Ultra 64's 'bulky drive' takes its name from its designer, Hiroshi Bulky.

END-OF-LEVEL BOSSES

Which games do these three boss characters come from?

SUPER QUIZ 39 ANSWERS

EASY

1 Hasbro
2 Alpha
3 Futurenet

MEDIUM

1 Digitiser
2 Five
3 Doom and Dirt Trax FX

HARD

1 Tom Jurmolek
2 Earthbound
3 David and Richard Darling

BONUS ROUND

1 Tintin in Tibet
2 Earthworm Jim 2
3 Hebereke's Popoitto

COMPO WINNERS

In issue 39 we offered you the chance to win five Energiser joypads in conjunction with top add-on manufacturers Wild Things. The five lucky winners are: Jim Wallman of London; Paul Brown of Stanley, Co. Durham; Edd Oliver of Whitbourne, Worcestershire; Leigh Harman of Seaford, East Sussex; and J. New of Accrington, Lancs. They all knew that the Mattel Intellivision pioneered joypad controllers, that you'd commonly find a joystick in a helicopter, and that the Ultra 64's joypad is spesh because it has an analogue thumb stick. Congrats go to all.

FANHUNTER

You'll find no fluffier fanzines

By Zy Nicholson

Always start your fanzine with a vaguely controversial coverline, we reckon. "Is the 16-bit dead?" asks the cover of Gap #6, and it does lead you to expect some kind of special feature inside. Instead, Onn Lee restricts his comments to an editorial and lets the reviews speak for themselves, with the likes of *Killer Instinct* (94%!) and *Yoshi's Island* (98%!) scoring considerably higher than anything currently available on 32-bit. There's an incredibly useful techie spread on overcoming PSX incompatibility – oh yes, it's not just us Ninty users who suffer PAL problems – and a surprisingly objective article on the Virtual Boy. No system war immaturity here: GAP is a zine by true gamefreaks.

When we first reviewed Red Leopard I complimented it on being a 'real' fanzine, so I'm delighted to see the mewling kitty blossom into a fully fanged pride mother huntress. Issue 'III' is a 114-page glue-bound joy that threatens to break your coffee table with bizarre contribs and artwork from the likes of Peter J Evans, Laura Watton, Helen McCarthy and many more. Expect cult and SF snippets, anime, X-Files, obscure film trivia, fiction, cartoons, finger food reviews, and plenty of little humorous bits that you can't help quoting to other people at inopportune moments. Incidentally, guys, the Red Leopard Book Of Losers (a brief guide to Car Stereo Losers, Merchandising Losers, Computer Losers, etc.) is written far too knowingly... Leopard takes full advantage of the fact that, being an underground publication, it really can print anything it wants. A veritable smorgasbord, as they say.

Just space to mention Role Call yet again, although I can hardly review it as I had a small featurette printed in the previous ish. If you like console RPGs of any description then order your copy now, or else suffer a 25% WIS penalty. Simple as that.

ESSENTIAL READING

GAP – £2 (inc. p&p) to Onn Lee, 125 Arnold Road, Bestwood Estate, Nottingham NG5 5HR. E-mail Marker@sv.span.com

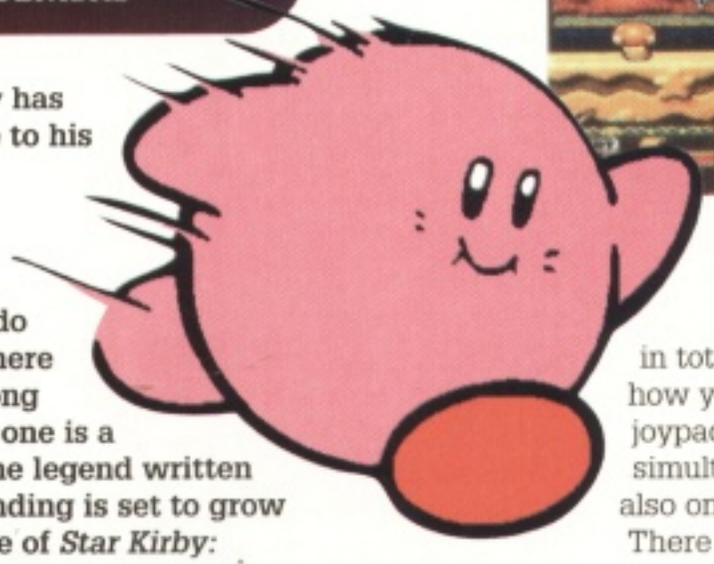
Red Leopard – inquiries to Peter Cullen, 329 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, Berks. RG40 3JT. E-mail RedLeopard@hpsound.demon.co.uk

RoleCall – £1.20 to Rachel Ryan, 25 Oakdene Ave, Woolston, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4NU

THINK PINK

Star Kirby: Super Deluxe

Hal/Nintendo ● 32Mbits



Although he only has one SNES game to his credit (the US-only release *Kirby's Avalanche*), Kirby has nevertheless become something of a Nintendo icon – if not quite up there with Mario, Donkey Kong or Link, the puffy pink one is a face that has videogame legend written all over it. And his standing is set to grow further with the release of *Star Kirby: Super Deluxe*, a six-games-in-one cart due for release in Japan any day now.

Kirby's convincing impression of a Hoover remains, but it's been joined by 23 other abilities, all of which are executable in at least five different ways to give over 100 in total, depending on how you jiggle the joypad. A two-player simultaneous mode is also on the cards.

There are some fabbo-sounding subgames that make up the sextet, too. From 'The Cave Big Project' to 'Revenge Of Meta-Knight' to 'Pray At Milky Way', they offer considerably varied twists on the basic theme, while one in particular, the 'Mega Punch' round, has more in common with the bonus games from *Sonic Blastman*.

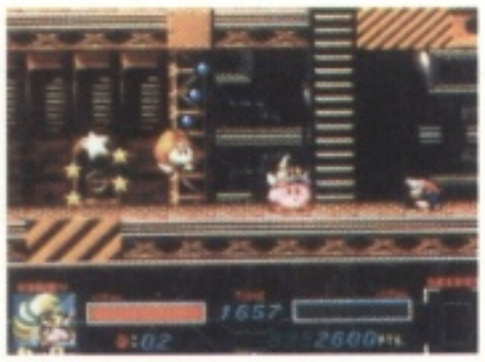
It all looks typically slick Nintendo stuff, and we're hoping that *Star Kirby: Super Deluxe* neither sucks nor blows when we review it next month.

Zippy, nippy, fluffy, cutesie pink Kirby.

Kirby's waiting patiently for you to guide him through…

…a mysterious land packed with fruit and strange looking insect creatures.

Kirby's a super hero in the truest sense. He can fly…



…He can disguise himself in times of trouble, well, almost.

He can even pack a mean punch. Not what you'd expect from a fluffball.

Don't know what's going on here though, but all will be revealed next ish. Promise.

OLD GAMES HERE*

Over the last few years, old games have become big news, to the point where you can't move for game bores claiming that *3D Monster Maze* on the ZX81 is a better game than *Doom* will ever be. These deluded types will soon have a heaven on earth if the British Film Institute has its way: the company is putting together an exhibition which will showcase videogames from their earliest forms in the '70s right up to those of today.

It'll be opening on London's South Bank in time for Christmas '96 but there's a chance you may be able to help out in the meantime. They're still missing quite a few old titles, you see, and are looking to locate games for the following systems in particular: Lynx, Dragon 32, BBC Micro, Texas TI99/4A, Sharp M2700, Commodore Vic 20, Atari VCS, Mattel Intellivision, Colecovision and Jupiter Ace. If you think you have something on any of these formats which might be of note, drop the BFI's videogame expert a line at this address: Tony Hetherington, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London, W1P 2LN.

We'll have a report from the exhibition the moment it flings open its doors.

* Sorry, Mr Digitiser Reader of Gwent, but we couldn't resist using this one again.

Sample the delights of golden oldies such as *Manic Miner* on the Spectrum later on this year, courtesy of the British Film Institute.

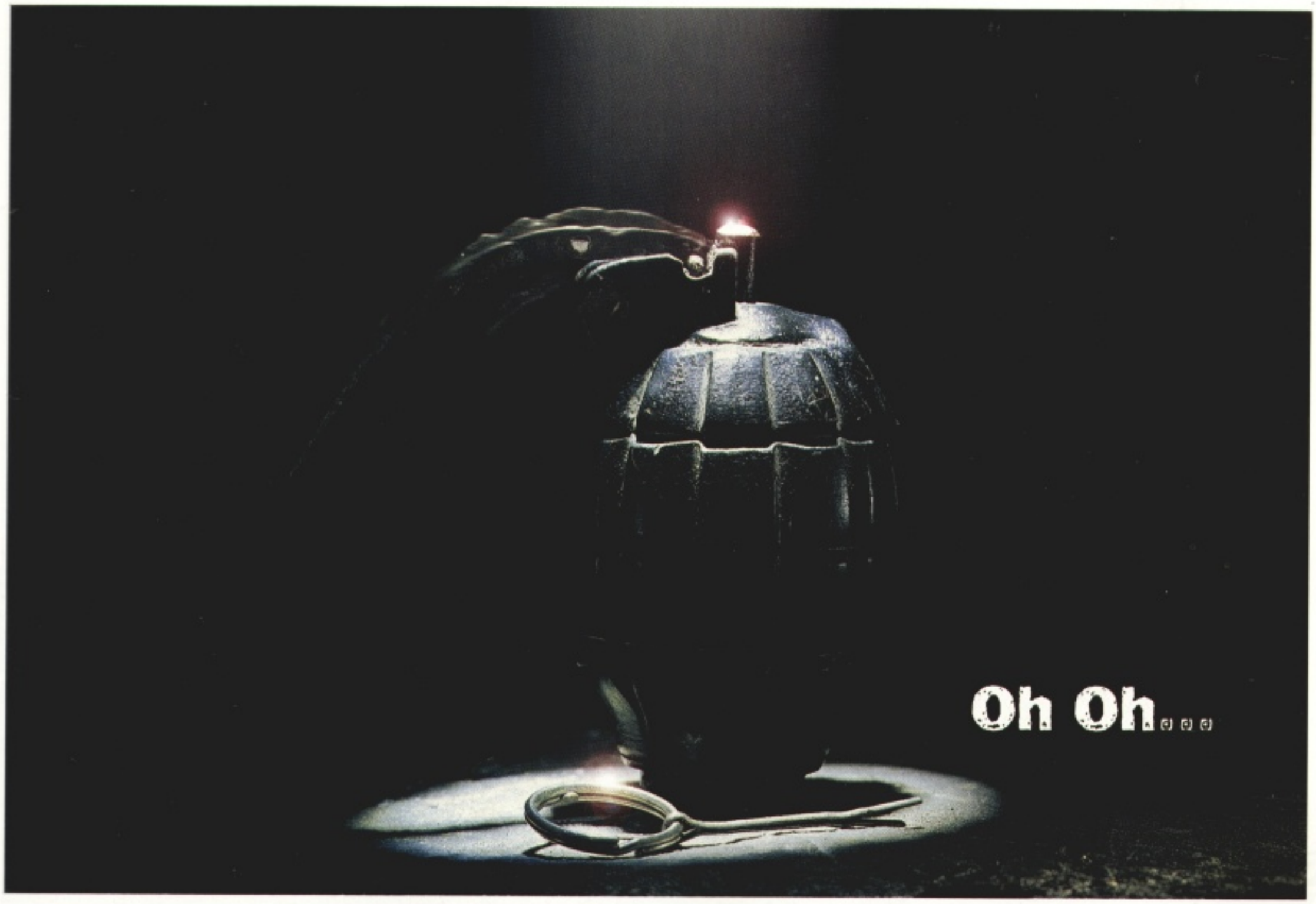
THE CHARTS

If you're the sort of person who likes to keep a beady eye on which games are selling most, you'll want to check the weekly charts available from those oiks on *Digitiser*, Channel 4's games 'thing' (page 470).

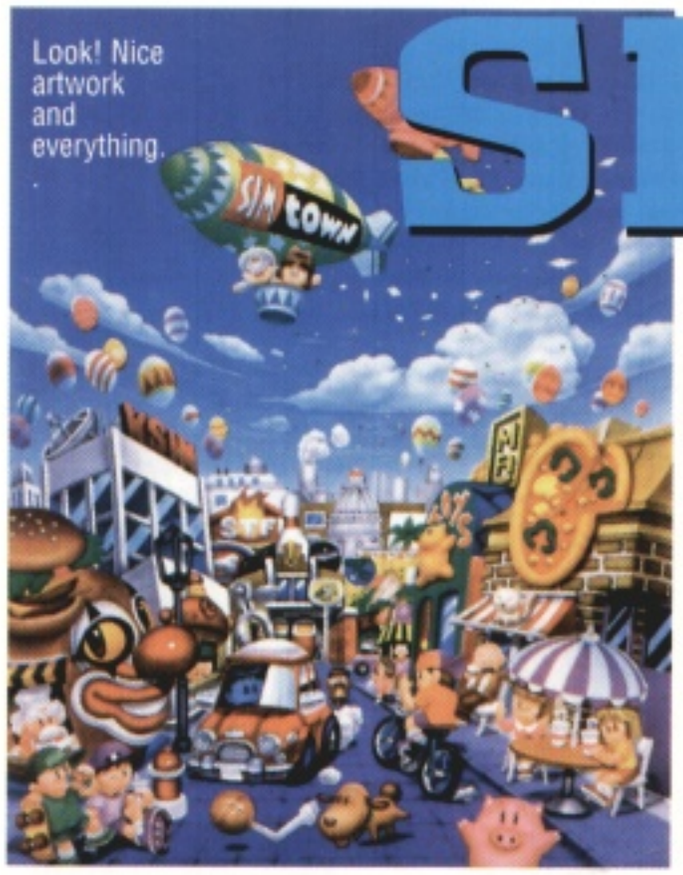
ELSPA

OFFICIAL GALLUP UK SUPER NINTENDO CHART

1	DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2	Nintendo	SP27 90%
2	YOSHI'S ISLAND	Nintendo	SP36 94%
3	KILLER INSTINCT	Nintendo	SP36 85%
4	FIFA SOCCER '96	Electronic Arts	SP37 84%
5	STREET RACER	Ubisoft	SP25 91%
6	SUPER METROID	Nintendo	SP20 92%
7	SUPERSTAR SOCCER DELUXE	Konami	SP38 94%
8	DOOM	Ocean	SP36 92%
9	MICKEY MANIA	Sony	SP27 87%
10	THEME PARK	Ocean	SP32 91%



SLIM SIM



Sim City Ltd
Imagineer

If this month's review of *Civilisation* has already grabbed your attention, you're probably the sort of gamer who likes his gaming served up with a bit of thinking as a side salad. In which case your ears will immediately prick up at the prospect of *Sim City Limited*, a Super Famicom translation of the PC title *Sim Town*.

Rather than simulating a city sprawl in the way both *City* and *City 2000* did, *Limited* operates on a smaller scale. Your objective is to build and maintain a comfortable township, worrying about things like forests and other natural resources and keeping a track on factors such as air condition – all in the name of keeping the populace happy, healthy and harmonious.

There are three modes of play: Original, where you freely build your town from scratch; Scenario, which gives you various ready-made towns that are in need of attention in some way; and Paint, which switches off most of the simulation functions allowing you to concentrate on just putting together an attractive-looking town just for the hell of it.

Tudor, Victorian, cottage, tower blocks – any style you choose.

There's a total of 49 features to pick and place, and while it's certainly not as complex as *City 2000* – this is more of a beginner's introduction to the theme – it looks like bumper fun. Sadly a Western translation looks unlikely – we're still waiting for *Sim City 2000* to be released outside of Japan, remember – and it looks like the UK SNES market will remain the chief preserve of shallow action games.

Choose from the icons...

And why not indulge yourself in a bit of top forest planting action? Great fun.

Why is it...?

That in RPGs...

● ... no matter how urgent a mission is, the party always has time to stop off at an inn, heal themselves, have a rest, wash, brush-up, etc. as many times as they want and still arrive at the enemy stronghold in the merest nick of time (or else that fraction of a second too late) to prevent the villain carrying out his nefarious plan for universal domination?

● ... the hero's sword/stick/woolly bobble hat has some kind of magical origin? Is it made by some secret international company funded by a gang of robed white-bearded old men who can see into the future when a young lad will come forth and save the world with a magic weapon? Maybe they want to make sure it's *their* brand of weapon he uses.

● ... the biggest bad guys make more comebacks than Frank Bruno? Let's face it, when the likes of Kefka fizzle and disappear without too much bother, you just *know* they're going to be back later on – fully imbued with the spirit of something-or-other and more powerful than ever.

● ... the ones with 'Last', 'Final' or 'Ultimate' in the title are the ones most likely to spawn half-a-dozen sequels?

● ... the kingdom of Xathbar (or wherever) will put its future in the hands of the local spotty teenager – who has no experience of fighting, magic or just about anything – at the drop of a hat?

● ... you collect gold and treasure when you defeat things like wolves and birds? Do all the animals in RPGs have little pouches around their necks or something? And what do they use their GPs for – popping down the shops for a loaf of bread?

● ... villages use the same architects and builders throughout? Surely it must get confusing, coming home from the tavern of an evening and being faced with a row of identical abodes.

Thanks to David Sanders of Co. Londonderry and Ken Murdock of Co. Antrim for sending in some of the above. Rewards are in the post.

Next month scrolling beat-'em-ups get the Why is it...? treatment.

CHEAPER LARFS

We were going to tell you all about a new magazine on its way from us squeezably lovely folk at Future Publishing, but the people who're doing it offered to tell you for us. They're fruit-loops like that, you see, just like Dave Lee Travis and people like that – just mad. Anyway, this is what they feel you should know:

"Comedy Review is a new! free! nude! chocolate! national comedy magazine which, should you possess even the vaguest evidence of a SENSE OF HUMOUR, you will be desperate to own. *Comedy Review* covers absolutely every melon-freakin' aspect of comedy, including TV, stand-up, books, films, and theatre. It's full-to-death of features, reviews, interviews, and... some... other things. But – it's much, MUCH more than that. It's £3 but you can, by taking the coupon over there into a branch of WH Smiths or John Menzies, get a startling ONE WHOLE POUND off the first issue. Yes. That means you can buy the FIRST ISSUE of a BRILLIANT NEW COMEDY MAG for a MEASLY TWO POUNDS! AND NOT THREE POUNDS. See?"

£1.00 off

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PC, PC CD-ROM, MAC, AMIGA, MEGA DRIVE, SNES,
PLAYSTATION, SATURN, CD32, JAGUAR, GAMEBOY.

TEAM 17

WORMS

they've turned

Ever felt like mercilessly blowing away your bank manager, tax collector, teacher, brother, sister, best friend, worst enemy or Jeremy Beadle?

Now you can, with Worms, the game of the year from Team 17 and Ocean.

It's totally pointless violence and totally addictive gameplay. Perfect.

What's it all about?

Well, rather like the morning after a really hot curry, the feeling is impossible to explain. You simply have to experience it.

So no matter what else you do today, get hold of a copy of Worms and blast away. Who knows, maybe you'll have the World's hardest worm.

© TEAM 17 1995

WORMS PLAYABLE PC DEMO - http://www.team17.com/

FANTA

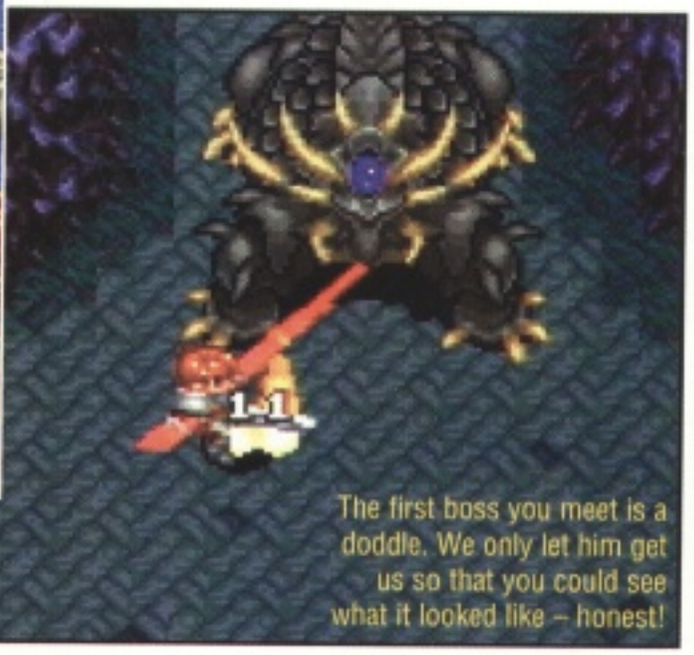
As Adol arrives at yet another land full of unruly demons, mysterious dungeons and fantastic treasure, we ask, "would you want to live in the land of Ys?"

Adol's just advanced the story by visiting the shrine at the far left of the village. Before, he couldn't pass the guy who's lying on the floor.

What you'll spend most of your time doing – whacking seven bells out of nasties.

Adol's trip to a quiet town in New Hampshire turned sour when he was attacked by an abomination of nature – a foul fish-person.

Adol takes advantage of Nina's hospitality by searching her bedroom for stuff he can nick.



The first boss you meet is a doddle. We only let him get us so that you could see what it looked like – honest!

Ys V

Nihon Falcom ● 24 Mbit + BB
Out now (Japan)

It was with some rather blurry pictures that we tried to fathom the depths of *Ys V* in issue 30 and came to the rather obvious conclusion that it was an action RPG with a *Zelda*-like, top-down view and looked like a bit of a step up from the last *Ys* SNES outing *Ys III – Dawn Of Ys* (which, frankly, wouldn't be difficult). Now the game has finally appeared (a lot later than expected), and we've had time to see if *Ys* has managed to keep pace with the leaps and bounds made in the SNES world during the past year or so.

For what many see as one of the top RPG series, *Ys*' storylines are remarkably traditional. Hero Adol Christian usually turns up at some town or port and ends up in a quest for some top riches. Hardly inspiring stuff and, alas, *Ys V* is no different. The standard plot elements of hidden cities, fabulous treasures and handy shopkeepers ready to sell you the latest in armour and weaponry are well catered for. For all the supposed storyline and character interaction, the RPG elements aren't going to keep you stumped for long. Even if you are a novice at the intricacies of the Japanese language, things move along swiftly as long as you go everywhere and talk to everyone. This is, after all, an action RPG, and, as such, the main part of the game is cut, thrust and parry.

The switch to an overhead view from *Ys III*'s side on gameplay was a wise one. Adol moves fast and smoothly although he

ASY QUEST

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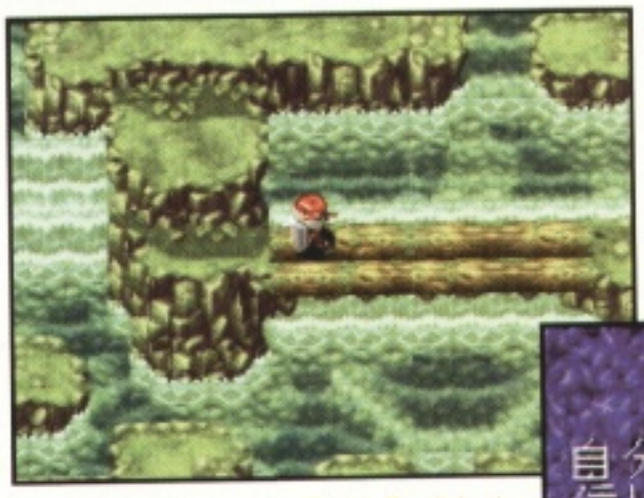
a wise one. Adol
though he

suffers from only being able to strike in four directions and has to make sure potential kills are on his right side (his sword hand). This makes play fast and easy and the chance of getting bored, searching for that elusive next 'event' to keep the story moving, is very slim. The graphics are generally pleasant with a few mist, rain and rippling water effects to please the eye, although they're hardly the amazing graphics we were previously led to believe. Outside of the towns, villages and dungeons, the countryside can become worryingly bland at times.

Another thing Falcom needs to look closely at is the actual programming of *Ys*. We managed to crash the game, by trapping Adol between bits of scenery, more than once, and walking about in a room of five or more other characters caused all manner of flicker and slowdown. When put against the cream of the newer A-RPGs like *Mana 2* and *Tenchi Souzou*, *Ys* comes out looking decidedly average. A comparison with *Brain Lord* would be more appropriate and even *Alcahest* gives it a good run for its money.

All in all *Ys V* doesn't do the series any good at all and without the reputation of its predecessors would easily disappear into the crowd. Falcom needs to have a serious rethink and a good look around at the competition before it embarks on *Ys VI*.



One of the better backgrounds in *Ys* – the rapids. Look closely and you can see Burt Reynolds floating by with a broken arm.

Right: Don't look now Adol, there's a plot ahoy! Girl embedded in crystal + mysterious ring = big trubbble!!

We'd be failing in our duties if we didn't bring you a pic of a 150ft Adol standing in the countryside.

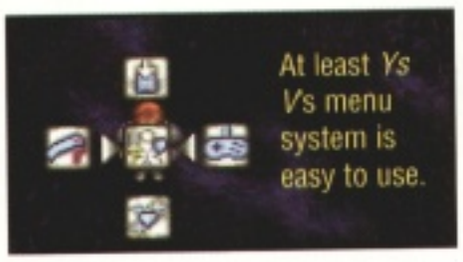
RULING THE ELEMENTS

In the time-honoured tradition, Adol can upgrade his trusty weapon by not only simply buying a new sword (although he can do that too), but by enchanting it with elemental magic. To you and me this means fire bolts and frosty blasts. He can also obtain a nice line in spells which let the game show off some nice graphical effects.

Nice graphical effects.

Happy is the Adol who can fire big bolts from his sword.

All this and puzzles too. *Ys V* also includes that old chestnut 'standing on the right spot to open a door'.



At least *Ys V*s menu system is easy to use.

Adol's main squeeze Nina stares into the distance and wonders if she's got time for that second cuppa.

Fantasy Quest snippets

Non Enix-istant

After getting all excited last month about the prospect of a Western *Tenchi Souzou* under the name *Genesis* and maybe even a conversion of *Dragon Quest VI* it seems that Enix have (for the moment at least) ceased their operations in America. Should any enterprising software company have the wherewithal, both titles are up for negotiation for publication overseas. Although, as they both weigh in at a whopping 32Mbits, understandably, there haven't been any takers yet. A strange situation indeed, seeing as Enix are going all out, offering big bucks in their $200,000 software competition. Or maybe that's the cause?

Square LA

Don't quite feel up to applying for a job at SquareSoft Japan (not surprising as you do need to be fluent in Japanese)? Well, they're also recruiting for their new setup in sunny, smoggy Los Angeles. The emphasis is on 3D work (using the infamous Silicon Graphics machines), although whether you'd be working on *Final Fantasy VII* or *Secret Of Evermore 2* isn't clear (and might be more important than may first appear). After Square's first Western effort we think that they'd be better off trying to hire better writers and conceptual artists than the 3D wizz-kids who are creating unoriginal pap like *Wing Commander*.

LIVE

FROM HELL CITY

By Nihon Sekai-yusu

HOBBY

This month Super Play travels to Tokyo's Hobby Exhibition and also takes a look at videogame magazines, Japanese-style.

Wil probably knows the names of all these... Alarming, isn't it?

Oh Mr. Bandai, tell us about your wares. Thanks.

As well as being mad about videogames, sports and manga, the Japanese have a passion which is not as widely known – modelling. Not strutting-along-a-catwalk modelling, mind, but the glue-and-scalpel Sunday afternoon variety.

The biggest event dedicated to this pursuit is the groundbreakingly-named Hobby Exhibition, which *Super Play* visited in November. Taking place in Harumi (the centre of Tokyo), the '95 exhibition was attended mainly by adults – most of whom giving the excuse that they were just accompanying their children...

Of the themed areas within the show, the biggest was dedicated to radio-controlled models, including planes, helicopters, cars and boats. Their popularity can be attributed to their relatively inexpensive prices and just about anyone can afford one. Not everyone can practically use one, though – the main problem to a typical Tokyoite being trying to find a home for his two-metres-across radio-controlled airplane in his four-mats room ('mats' being a commonly-used unit of size – about two metres long by one wide – which comes from the dimensions of a traditional Japanese tatami mat). His other difficulty

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comes when he wants to play with his model – getting out of Tokyo by train takes around two hours. Of course it's always possible to pilot a radio-controlled car on a Tokyo building's rooftop and enjoy the Fujiyama view, but planes aren't quite as practical an option...

Modelling mag *Hobby Japan* produces specials to tie in with particular ranges. Just like this one, in fact.

The remaining sections of the exhibition hall offered scale models of just about anything: tanks, soldiers, even a Hitler in the war section; anime characters from series such as Lupin and *Sailor Moon*; superheroes from the Marvel universe; and, wait for it, replicas of Japanese shrines rendered in real wood.

The show's 'Hobby' tag ensured that it wasn't just plastic and resin model kits drawing the crowds. BB guns are big in Japan at the moment, and show visitors had the opportunity to test the very latest in gas- and electrical-powered varieties at custom-built shooting ranges. Paint-ball guns have long since become outdated here, mainly because they are dirty, and also because they cannot match the excitement on offer in pulling on the trigger of a fully automatic BB gun. Usually firing 6 mm plastic bullets – at a very high speed – BB guns are used in recreational events in Japan, with two or more teams taking part in capture-the-enemy-flag competitions which will be familiar to those who've taken part in similar events in the UK. Show visitors eager to pick up some serious hardware were presented with a wide range of replica guns – the average price of their automatic rifle being 30,000 Yen (approx. £190), with some 'sniper' models reaching a wallet-busting 200,000 Yen (approx. £1270). Less hardcore enthusiasts could pick up classically styled handguns starting at around 6,000 Yen (approx. £40), while M16s and wooden AK 47s were on show for those wanting some serious automatic firepower.

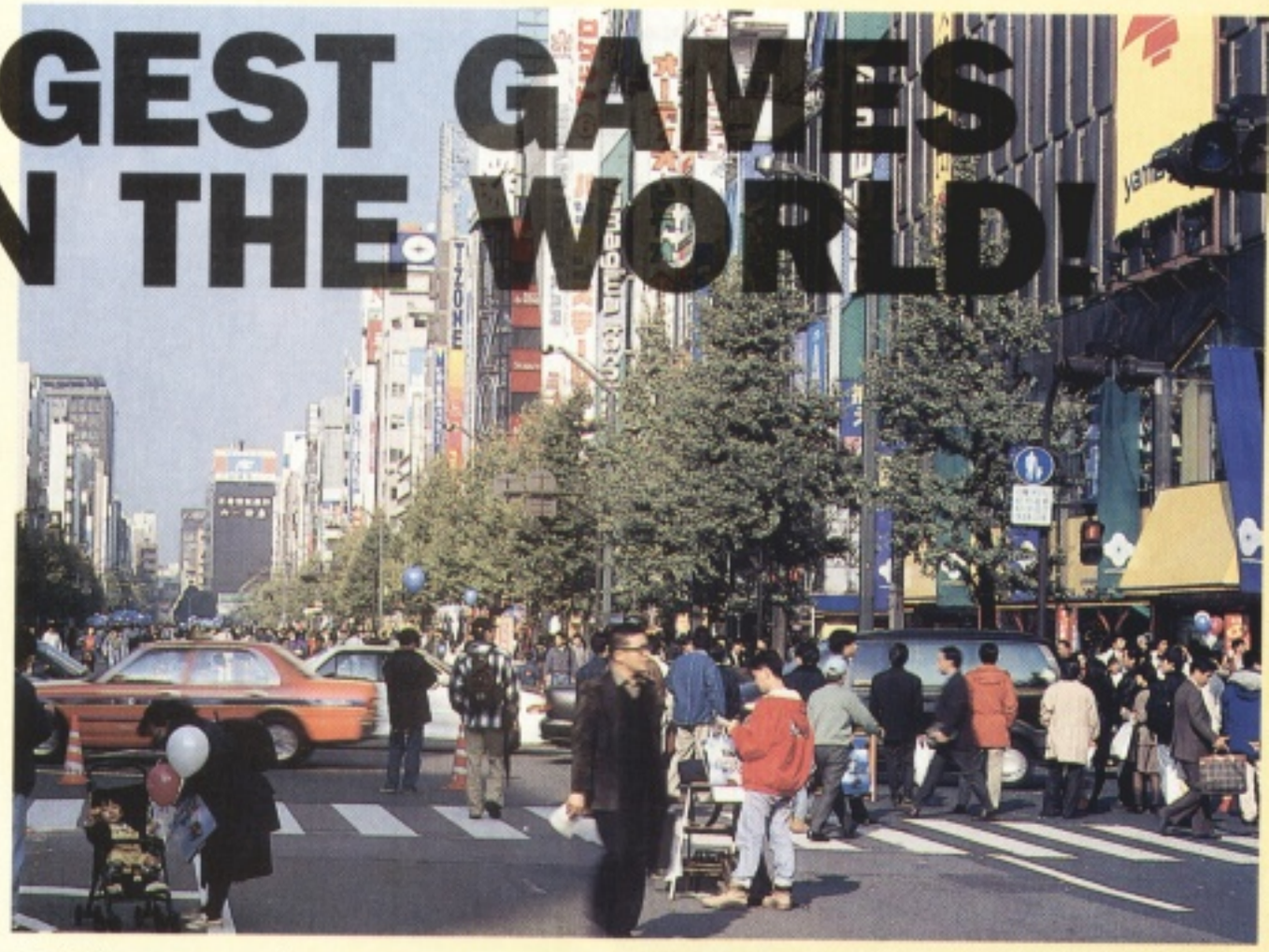
Back in the general models area Bandai had a booth large enough to justify their standing as the biggest toy company in Japan. Their range of wares was plethoric: from new models based on the TV series *Gundam Wing* to the older varieties such as Gundam 083, Gundam 0080, Gundam Z, Gundam Sentinel, Gundam ZZ, F90, Silhouette Formula 91, Gundam F91 and V-Gundam. All were available in plastic format, some in ready-made form and some in kits which could be constructed and coloured with special marker pens as opposed to traditional modelling paint. The fascination in sitting down to construct and paint a Bandai 1/60 scale model mobile suit rather than an Airfix Spitfire with nobby transfers isn't too difficult to fathom...

More Gundam kits, this time presented against a rather fetching diorama. Coo.

Elsewhere, old Japanese favourite Godzilla also made an appearance in model form along with a host of well-known B-movie monsters – all well known to adult attendees who've followed their cinematic escapades for more than 25 years. And for fans of Yamato, the notorious Japanese WWII battleship, it was even possible to buy versions of its spaceship incarnation in various scales – their favoured scale depending on the space available in their closets at home, of course...

Those with a thing about helicopters are more than well catered for.

THE BIGGEST GAMES MAGS IN THE WORLD!



Videogamers in the UK are a spoilt bunch when it comes to magazines – if not necessarily in terms of what they get to read (bar *Super Play*, of course), then certainly in sheer volume of choice. Japanese gamers have nowhere near as wide a selection to choose from, but one gander at the mags that *are* available is enough to confirm that they're not getting a bum deal at all. The most popular publication, you see, is usually around 250 pages big, and – get this – it comes out *weekly*.

Famicom Tsushin is its name, and while its content is no great shakes for roughly the first quarter – with news stories, charts and previews appearing in the style of most Western publications – from thereon in things don't go quite so predictably. An average issue could include the following: snack round-ups (where different brands of the same kind of thing are 'reviewed'), CD reviews (of both the game music and traditional variety), pop idol features (spreads dedicated to Japanese girl singers posing), reviews of new toys, movie round-ups, occasional 'Gamer's Street Style' sections (where models show off the latest in Mario T-shirts) and bizarre console tests (where new machines are tested to see which has the most powerful CD eject mechanism and suchlike).

Famicom Tsushin (left) regularly features cover artwork by Susumu Matsushita.

Below left: In a special test, the *Tsushin* team examine various consoles' performance when slid across ice. Look, just don't ask.

Bung in a load of vaguely game-related manga strips, page after page of reader-contributed material and enough charts, graphs and release data to keep a statistician happy for a fortnight and you have quite an organ. The true hardcore UK gamer will certainly find it fascinating, and, after seeing it, you'll never look at UK mags in quite the same way again.

What's amazing is that the whole thing is produced using methods that are antiquated by comparison to 1990s publishing

Left: A wide choice, but not perhaps as wide as in the UK. Below: *The Super Famicom* magazine.

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The Super Famicom
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Far left: Along with monthly mags, Japanese publishers produces tons of specials dedicated to individual games.

Left: *V-Jump*, Japan's foremost gaming/anime crossover magazine.

standards. While Apple Macintoshes are used all the way through *Super Play*'s design process, the *Tsushin* team use a 'paste-up' method, where individual parts of the page – text, artwork and screenshots – are cut out and physically laid out to form the finished pages, which are then electronically scanned in order to send to be printed. It's not surprising, therefore, that *Super Play*'s full-time team numbers four, while *Tsushin* draws upon the resources of over 50 staff...

Other notable Japanese gaming mags include *V-Jump*, which mixes videogames with coverage of the anime scene; *Gamest*, a monthly effort which covers new coin-ops; and *The Super Famicom*, a mag specifically aimed at, yes, our fave little beige box o' tricks.

WHERE YOU CAN GET THEM

You should be able to get all of the mags mentioned here from The Japan Centre (which sits just across the road from Tower Records in London's Piccadilly) or Books Nippon (which is just by St. Paul's Cathedral). They aren't cheap, though, so you might want to take your cheque book with you if you're looking to pick up a bundle.

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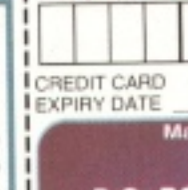

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Be it Sailor Moon or Fist Of The North Star there's nothing better for the otaku video game fan than picking up a joypad and 'being' their favourite character. Peter J Evans and Wil Overton add gel to hair and buff their power armour to link the games to their origins.

ANIME WORLD SPECIAL

GAME ON!

It was way back in issue two when *Super Play* first covered the link between anime and games and it's easy to see why they prove so popular. You only have to look at our own tradition of film to game tie-ins to understand why publishers see pound signs at the prospect of selling huge quantities of what doesn't have to be the best game in the world, simply because it's got a big name on the box. And, just like Western tie-ins, the Japanese products are generally of a lower quality than they would be if they had to stand on their own. So take a deep breath and prepare to enter the world of the anime game.

Ranma 1/2

The show

Rumiko Takahashi's longest-running series, and probably her most odd. Ranma Saotome is a young martial-arts student learning the skills of his father, Genma. On a training tour through China, both fighters fall victim to Jusenkyou, a series of cursed ponds, and end up cursed themselves: if splashed with water, Ranma turns instantly into a girl, while his similarly afflicted father becomes a giant panda... Only an application of hot water reverts them back to their previous forms.

If this wasn't enough, Ranma soon gets another shock when he finds out that he has been engaged for years! Genma and his friend Souuun Tendo arranged the marriage before they

The pinnacle of The Ranma games so far is *Super/Hard Battle*. An American release was planned but never appeared.

3 X 3 Eyes

The show

The ultimate mix of cute and gross, adapted from Yuzo Takada's sprawling manga series of the same title. Yakumo Fujii lives a life of relative normality until he meets a young Tibetan girl called Pai, who has travelled all the way to Japan to find him. A letter from his father tells Yakumo that the girl is actually the last of the Sanjiyan Unkara, a race of three-eyed immortals with spectacular psychic powers.

Yakumo is understandably sceptical about this, but an encounter with a gigantic spectral harpy – Pai's pet, normally hidden within her walking staff – convinces him otherwise. Killed stone dead by the monster, Yakumo is resurrected by Pai's magic, but at a price: he now lives as an indestructible zombie, his soul kept by Pai until she can fulfil her heart's desire and become Human...

The games

With the recent arrival of a second series of OAVs the SNES' quota of *3X3 Eyes* releases is about to double to two. The first game, from 'top' average games collaborators Yutaka and Bandai is an RPG consisting of vaguely disturbing faceless characters wandering around a host of identical cities. Only occasionally do Pai and Yakumo stumble across some badly realised monsters to engage in turn-based combat with. The second game is described as an 'adventure' rather than an RPG with battles shown in cinematic cutaways rather than the usual turn-based approach.

Not the most terrifying demons you'll ever see but then none of the graphics in the *3X3 Eyes* RPG are anything to write home about.

The new game looks to be a far greater improvement in the graphics stakes.

founded their own martial arts schools. When they meet at Souun's house, Ranma finds himself engaged to the violent, boy-hating Akane. So begins a series of adventures which blend romance, sex-comedy and martial-arts farce with a huge cast of characters who are all either mad, cursed, or both.

The games

Another series with more than its fair share of SNES tie-ins. Currently there are three *SFII* clones, an RPG and a puzzle game doing the rounds. *Ranma* has the rare distinction of being the only anime based game to actually get a release in the UK, from Ocean (the second fighter – *Ranma 1/2 – Bakuretsu Rantou-hen*), although for some strange reason (and much to the horror of fans) many of the characters names have changed and in some cases (Shampoo – now called Bambou) even their gender has been tampered with! While not terrible, the fighting games do suffer from being too easy. The third in the series – *Ranma 1/2 – Super/Hard Battle* (SP#21) is the most competent with gorgeous graphics and even sound samples by the original voice artists. Fantasy Quest touched on the RPG (*Ranma 1/2 – Hidden Treasure of the Crimson Cats*) briefly in issue 14 although writer Rik Haynes obviously didn't have a clue what he was on about, giving *Ranma* the wrong surname and even turning his father into his brother.

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Magical Talruto-kun

The show

A popular children's show, featuring a small and rather inept little wizard with an enormous blue hat. Talruto was summoned to Earth from the world of magic by 5th grade student Edojou Honmaru, in the hope of (a) becoming less of a nerd, and (b) impressing Kawai Iyona, the class cutie. Unfortunately, Talruto is very young and not exactly Gandalf-material – his magic lasts a maximum of ten minutes, and often goes horribly wrong, getting poor Honmaru into more trouble than when he started. For example, the lad has to keep a female identity in reserve, for all the times that Talruto ends up transforming him into a temporary girl...

The little chap with the big tongue. Not a description many of us would favour.

Magical Talruto-kun began as a manga series in *Shonen Jump* magazine, drawn by Egawa Tatsuya. It became popular enough for a TV series (87 episodes from 1990 to 1992), and three feature-length productions.

The game

As cute as they come, the little wizard with the unnaturally big tongue's SNES adventure is a colourful *Mario*-style platformer. There are buns to be collected and a variety of small, inoffensive (but highly dangerous), animals to be done away with as Talruto-kun makes his way around the town. There's even a bonus one-armed-bandit game in there! If you were being predictable you might say this was one for the younger player.

Use Talruto's tongue to scoop up those tasty buns. Surreal or what?

Mobile Suit Gundam

The show

Mobile SUIT Gundam is the mother and father of all mecha-combat stories, an angst-ridden saga of the war between the people of Earth and those of its space colonies. First seen in 1979, Yoshiyuki Tomino's story introduced 'hard' science fiction to traditional mecha opera, and gave birth to a phenomenon that has lasted through several TV series, cinema films and OAVs, not to mention enough model kits to bury a small country.

The latest in the series *New Mobile War Chronicle Gundam Wing* involves the machinations of a shadowy industrial combine called the Romefeller Syndicate, and their formation of an elite Mobile SUIT assault team called the Specials. In response to this new threat to the colonies, five ex-Syndicate scientists each develop a highly advanced Gundam mecha, entrusting the machines to a small group of heroic young pilots. The stage is set for yet another epic confrontation, as the Syndicate and their puppet Earth government stage a series of coups and devious internal assaults against the colonies...

The game

The first SNES *Gundam* game tied in with the mighty Gundam cashed in on the, then, big film *Gundam Formula 91* and was a simulation battle game with

Even the mighty Gundam (this time from *Gundam G*) can't escape the curse of trying to emulate *Street Fighter II*. Go on, hit him with yer big stick, Gunny!

Fist Of The North Star

The Show

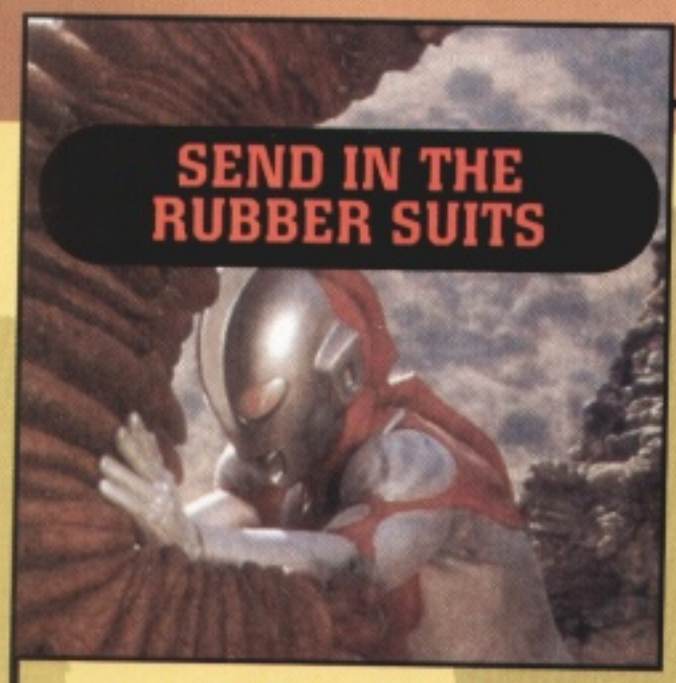
Based on a manga series that ran in *Shonen Jump* magazine between 1983 and 1988, *Fist of the North Star* is a violent and bloody story set in a world reduced to desert and ruins by nuclear war. Star of the piece is Kenshiro, a lone warrior trained in awesome martial-arts disciplines, who must travel across the blasted world in search of his kidnapped girlfriend. On his journeys he battles seemingly endless arrays of warriors, mutants, and hell-raising bike gangs, none of which are a match for Ken's particular method of fighting: a punch from this guy, and ten seconds later your head explodes...

Created by writer Buronson with the original title of *Hokuto No Ken*, *Fist of the North Star* spawned a long-running TV series, an anime film and, shortly, a live-action movie starring Gary Daniels.

The games

Oh dear. Poor old Ken hasn't fared too well when it comes to SNES games. Like *Dragon Ball* they're either *Street Fighter* clones or lacklustre RPGs but without any of the gameplay twists to make them stand out. *Hokuto no Ken 6* (SP#4) has to stand out as one of the worst fighting games on any system and doesn't contain any of the violent excesses that make the series so memorable. More recently *Fist Of The North Star* has moved over 'The Next Gen' with the ubiquitous 'Digital Comic'.

Kenshiro may look in fine form but *North Star 6* is so lacking in gameplay a call to Watchdog may be in order. This surely contravenes some trade descriptions act.



Apart from the wild 'n woolly worlds of anime and manga, the Japanese are also reknowned for their fondness for live-action heroes and monsters. Although there have been a fair few 'tokusatsu' (special photography) films and shows over the years, as far as SNES games derived from them goes, it boils down to the big two – *Godzilla* and *Ultraman*.

Godzilla's finest SNES moment (if you can call it that) was reviewed in SP#25 with *Super Godzilla*, another

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the now familiar cinema cuts to display the result of a conflict. Since then, the heavy wargame scenarios have been left to his Super Deformed cousin while the real thing has fallen into the *Street Fighter II* clone rut.

It may not have been perfect but the first SNES *Gundam* game had more scope for improvement than this.

Top strategy action as Gundam is joined by other 'famous' mecha from Xabungle, Aura Battler Dunbine and L-Gaim in *Battle Robot Legend*.

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one of those 'sim/fight' games. Whenever you came up against one of big G's enemies you would have to grapple with the Fighting Spirit System™ which actually meant waggling the joypad around and hoping for the best.

Ultraman has fared little better. The original game was one of the Super Famicom's earliest releases and its lame one-on-one fighting formula set the standard from then on. Even the follow-up *Ultraseven* (SP#9) with its simultaneous two-player game failed to really improve things.

Ultraseven gets a good kicking and, with a game like this, deservedly so.

Background

The Show

Akira Toriyama's two-fisted sequel to *Dragonball*, a magical martial-arts tale packed with bizarre characters and ridiculous amounts of collateral damage. Loosely based on the Chinese legend of the Monkey King and his travels, this massive (153 TV episodes of *Dragonball*, and over 250 of *DBZ*) series charts the adventures of Son Goku, a spike-haired tearaway with a monkey tail and lethal quarterstaff, on his quest for the powerful magic artefacts known as the Dragonballs.

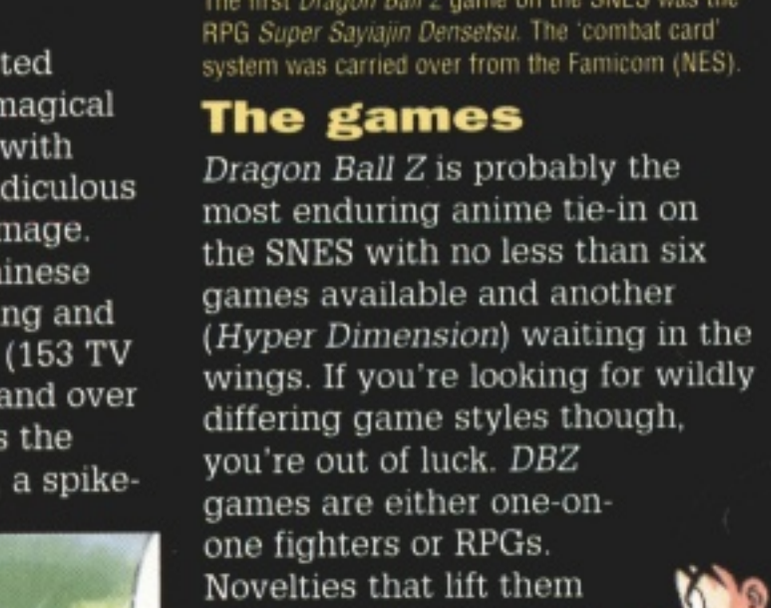
Dragon Ball Z returns to Son Goku some years later – he is now married and has a son, called Son Gohan. By this time, Goku's fighting powers are almost unimaginable, as are those of his enemies: their battles regularly leave mountains flattened and large areas of land torn to shreds. These are the kind of people who use moons as projectiles...

You can forgive *Dragon Ball Z* for spawning so many fighting games. It's only reflecting the nature of the show after all.

The first *Dragon Ball Z* game on the SNES was the RPG *Super Sayiajin Densetsu*. The 'combat card' system was carried over from the Famicom (NES).

The games

Dragon Ball Z is probably the most enduring anime tie-in on the SNES with no less than six games available and another (*Hyper Dimension*) waiting in the wings. If you're looking for wildly differing game styles though, you're out of luck. *DBZ* games are either one-on-one fighters or RPGs. Novelties that lift them out of the ordinary are a split screen (allowing battles over a distance) for the fight games and a combat system for the RPGs that uses cards to decide the outcome. For more info on the second and third fighters in the series (or *Dragon Ball Z – Super Battle History 2 & 3* for purists) we reviewed them in issues 17 and 27 respectively.



The split-screen feature that sets *DBZ* fighters apart from the rest. A novel idea that really does add something.

Sailor Moon

The show

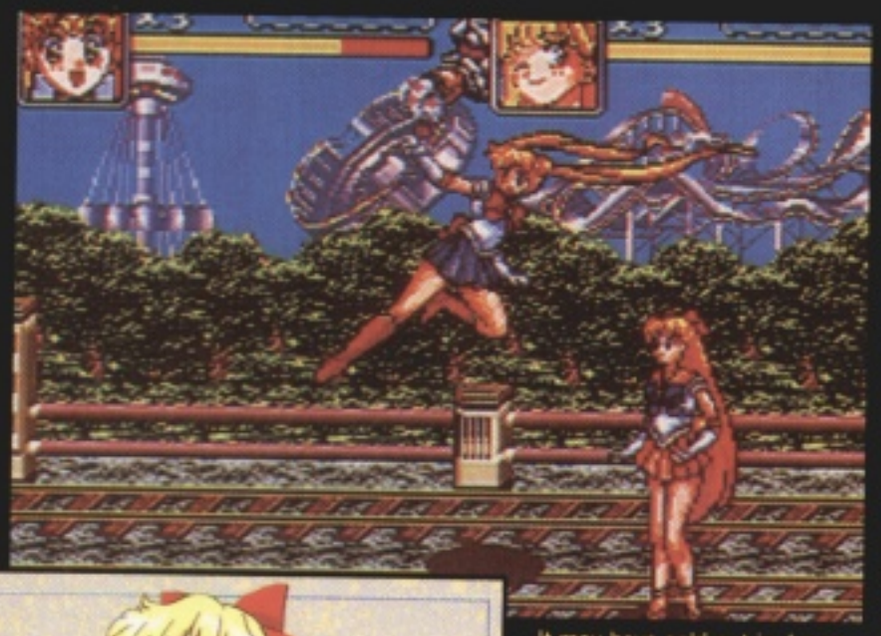
Love it or hate it, there is no denying that *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon* is the biggest thing in Japanese animation in the last two years. Despite being wedged firmly into the 'magical girl' genre and aimed exclusively at girls between the ages of four and twelve, the show (based on Takeuchi Naoko's manga) has displayed an alarming ability to gather fans from all demographic groups, especially in America.

Tsukino Usagi is a student at Juban Junior High School: 14 years old, clumsy, weepy, and generally ineffectual. For reasons quite unfathomable to sane human beings, Usagi was given magical powers by a talking black cat, enabling her to transform into a weepy, ineffectual super-heroine. Thus empowered, she goes out to fight crime, demons, and the like, and usually ends up getting rescued by somebody else.

Sailor Moon has lasted for three TV series, at least one film, and a quite successful translation for American TV. It has an army of dedicated fans, so despite what it might look like on the surface, it is obviously doing something right...

The games

Not only are the girls big on the anime scene, their gaming exploits on SNES are pretty impressive too. The first game – *Bishojo Senshi Sailor Moon* (*Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon* – a *Final Fight* clone) completely sold out in Japan and a second run of cartridges had to be manufactured. Subsequent games (vaguely following whatever series was currently running on TV) have followed the traditional pattern of fighting, RPG or puzzle game. The latest RPG – *Bishojo Senshi Sailor Moon SS: Another Story* – does introduce new characters but if any of the games get a Western release (more likely than you may think now that the US dubbed version is in syndication) it's likely to be the fighting games.



It may have sold out in Japan but is unlikely to do so here.

The latest RPG – *Another Story* – has the girls all confused.

Yu Yu Hakusho

The show

Once again based on a *Shonen Jump* manga, *Yu Yu Hakusho* is the story of Yuusuke, a 14-year-old juvenile delinquent who gets into fights and refuses to use the intelligence he was blessed with. When he gets killed saving a child from being hit by a car, the denizens of the spirit world are so perplexed by this abrupt change in character that they don't let him in. Instead, Yuusuke is reincarnated as a psychic detective and demon-hunter.

Yuusuke's powers increase during the series, as do those of his enemies. He builds up a team of friends, a couple of which are demons themselves, and gets involved with demonic fighting tournaments, mind-controlling bugs, and rifts between our world and that of the spirits. A nice mixture of humour, good characterisation and supernatural battles.

The games

Namco have produced three *Yu Yu Hakusho* games for the SNES. Two straight *SFII* clones and a strange hybrid called a 'simulation/battle' game where the results of the combat are played out movie style in the top half of the screen (like *Gundam F-91*). Like *Ranma 1/2* and *Dragon Ball* before it, neither of the fighting games can really hold a candle to *Street Fighter* although they're competent enough. The real appeal lies in being able to battle with your favourite anime characters.

Yu Yu Hakusho 2 in full fighting mode.

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DEFORMED!

There's nowt that sells so well as cute and funny, a fact borne out by the huge amount of games using characters that have been given that peculiarly Japanese treatment of 'Super Deforming'. About 90% of Bandai's software arm Banpresto has featured, in some form or another, squished versions of famous characters.

Great Battle

The *Great Battle* series from Banpresto started out with just three characters – Gundam, Kamen Rider and Ultraman. The first game was an overhead exploration/shooter, but by the time of *Great Battle 2 – Last Fighter Twin* had progressed (?) to a slightly off-skew side-on scrolly beat-'em-up and has stayed that way ever since. Joining the cast was Earth Fighter Roah who was created specially by Banpresto and has now become their mascot character. This quartet of mischievous midgets have now worked their way through no less than five Great Battles, also finding time to star in *SD Battle Dodgeball*, *Battle Soccer* (1 & 2), *Battle Racers*, and *Battle Pinball* (SP#34).

Ultraman gets whopped in the first *Great Battle*. Top music though. Well, sort of.

Great Battle 3 had a medieval setting whilst the latest game (*GB 5*) has the deformed quartet as cowboys.

SD Gundam designs can often get a tad out of hand.

Super Robot War

If the *Great Battle* games haven't exactly won the adoration of hardened gamers around the world Banpresto's next SD series has (well, in Japan at least). *Super Robot War* may feature squashed versions of such notable mecha as Gundam (again), Mazinger Z and Getta Robo G, but, as opposed to *Great Battle*'s play-for-laughs attitude, *SRW* is a proper war game simulation.

...and the rest?

Apart from the odd release like Banpresto's *CB* (Child Body – another way of saying SD, or you could have CD – Comical Deform) *Character Wars* which used shrunken versions of Go Nagai creations such as Devil Man and Kekko Kamen, Banpresto pretty much have the market sewn up. *Sailor Moon* gets the SD treatment whenever the girls star in a puzzler, and parent company Bandai have published a couple of games using a compilation of unrelated characters.

If only Channel 4 had shown this version of *Devil Man*.

CB Character Wars – an odd game.

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The show

The animated spin-off from Keita Amemiya's live-action Zeiram (reviewed this issue in Irresponsible Pictures – p78), which starred Yuko Moriyama as the alien bounty-hunter Iria. The story - which involved Iria's attempts to trap and defeat the renegade killing-machine Zeiram before he can wreak havoc on Earth - was successful enough to spawn not only a second film, but a series of OAVs as well.

While Zeiram was a dark and moody mixture of gore, guns, and cheap-but-impressive special effects, director Amemiya has made the six-part OAV series somewhat lot lighter in tone, with colourful mecha galore and updated character designs by Masakazu (Video Girl Ai) Katsura. Iria: The Animated Zeiram takes place three years before the events of the film, and features the young Iria before she started out as a mercenary bug-hunter. We also get to see a slew of new characters, including Iria's brother Glen, and the human alter-ego of Bob, seen only as a sentient computer in the original.

The standard format for easy tie-ins.

The game

Being quite a recent release Iria has only spawned one SNES game – Hyper Iria. An average scrolling platform shooter which looks like it uses exactly the same engine as games based on Appleseed, Lupin III, Tetsuwan Atom and Cyborg 009. Iria does have some nice cinematic cut scenes but alas that's not enough to save it from tie-in obscurity.

Captain Tsubasa

The show

The trials, triumphs and tribulations of Tsubasa, the captain of a Japanese football team. Artist Yoichi Takahashi began drawing this long-running and popular manga back in 1981, seeing it published in *Shonen Jump* magazine. Within a year, the *Captain Tsubasa* anime series was grabbing a stadium full of fans on Japanese TV.

Takahashi took a rest from *Tsubasa* for a while, but came back onto the field in 1994 with *Captain Tsubasa – World Youth Version*, which is still running in *Shonen Jump* now. Not all that popular over here – sports anime is an as-yet untapped market in the UK – but it is highly-regarded in other countries, including Hong Kong, where it is serialised both on TV and in *Ex-Am* magazine.

The game

The *Captain Tsubasa* games aren't your average footy extravaganzas. You hardly have any control over the outcome of the matches as they're played out cinema style while you occasionally get to choose whether to go for the header or not. Good fun for a while, but with the series now reaching its fifth instalment, the formula could do with a overhaul.

Speed lines ahoy as Captain Tsubasa turns a harmless game of footy into an anime cliché festival.

GOING THE OTHER WAY

Such is the popularity of some video game characters and stories that occasionally they make the leap the other way and end up as anime stars.

King of the RPGs *Dragon Quest* not only made it as a successful TV series but also as a long-running manga (edited by none other than the game's author Yuji Horii). Other notables are of course the big fighting games such as *Street Fighter II* (Movie and TV series), *Fatal Fury* (OAV) and *Samurai Shodown* (OAV). Other RPGs include *Final Fantasy* (OAVs very loosely based on FFV), *Ys* and the RPG spoof *Fortune Quest*.

Dragon Quest the TV series (above) only fits in with the game (DQ V – right) in name only.

Above: *Ys* made it to the animated screen in a series of OAVs. Like the games themselves they are pretty standard fantasy fare.

Top RPG spoof *Fortune Quest* managed to make its way from game to anime.

Ushio and Tora

The show

An OAV series whose plot bears a striking resemblance to that of *Tenchi Muyo*, with another young lad (Ushio) entering his ancestral temple when he shouldn't do, accidentally waking the demon sleeping within. In this case, however, the demon is a giant orange tiger (Tora), and the only thing that stops it eviscerating Ushio on the spot is the magical spear that kept it bound in the first place.

The spear does more than just keep Tora off Ushio's back; it becomes his means of fighting the supernatural entities who begin attacking him at every turn. Soon, both he and Tora realise that they have enemies more dangerous than either of them, and become reluctant allies in order to survive.

Ushio and Tora is a neat, fast-moving blend of modern humour and ancient folklore, adapted from a story by Kazuhiro Fujita. It reaches its peak of weirdness in the *Ushio and Tora CD Theatre*, a Super Deformed spoof episode.

The game

Ushio and Tora only ever made it to one SNES game despite the show's popularity. Reviewed way back in issue 7 this lame scrolling slice-'em-up from (yes, you guessed it) Yutaka only has two moves and shouldn't even tempt the most ardent U&T aficionado.

Tora leaps in for the kill utilising one of his, er, two moves.

What we really want is a game using the 'deformed' versions of Ushio and Tora.

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Above: *Ys* made it to the animated screen in a series of OAVs. Like the games themselves they are pretty standard fantasy fare.

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What about all the others?

Not definitive by any means, but as a starting point for those with stamina enough to want to try and hunt out and collect anime games, you could do worse than to start here.

Aim For The Ace! (Ace no Nerae!) – Tennis game
Appleseed – Platform shooter
Area 88 (UN Squadron) – Capcom shooter
Armoured Trooper Votoms – Strategy
Astro Boy (Tetsuwan Atom) – Platformer
Bastard!! (Bastard!! Ankouku no Hakai-shin) – One-on-one fighter with strange 3D effect
Battle Robot Legend – Sim/wargame
CB Character Wars – Scrolling fighter
Captain Tsubasa 1 to 5 – Cinematic football
Chibi Maruko-chan – Puzzle adventure
GPX-Cyber Formula – Race game with impossible corners
Cyborg 009 – Poor platformer
Doraemon (1-4) – Platformer

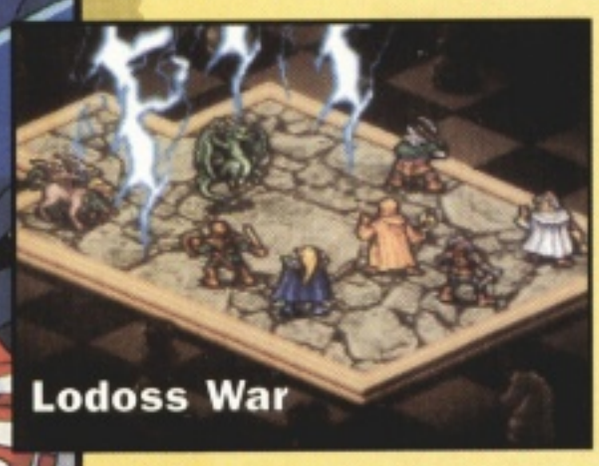
Dragon Ball Z –
Legend of the Super Sayiajin – RPG
Super Battle History – Fighting
Super Battle History 2 – Fighting
Super Battle History 3 – Fighting
Legend of Super Son Goku - RPG
Legend of Super Son Goku 2 – RPG
Hyper Dimension – Fighting

Far East Of Eden Zero – RPG
Fist of the North Star (Hokuto no Ken)
5 – RPG
6 – Fighter
7 – Fighter
Ghost Sweeper Mikami – Scrolling fighter
Go Go Ackman (1 to 3) – Platformer
Great Battle – Adventure shooter
Great Battle II Last Fighter Twin – Scrolling fighter
Great Battle III – Scrolling fighter
Great Battle IV – Action shooter
Great Battle V – Scrolling fighter
Hyper Iria – Platform shooter
Legend of the Galactic Heroes – Simulation RPG
Lupin III Castle of Cagliostro – Platformer

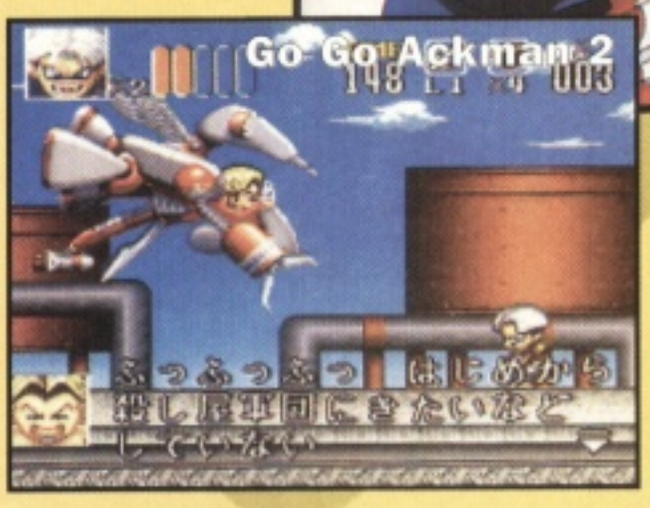
Magical Knight Rayearth – RPG
Magical Talruto-kun – Platformer
Mazinger Z – Fighter
Metal Jack – Scrolling fighter
Mobile Police Patlabor – Simulation/RPG
Mobile Suit Gundam –
Gundam Formula F91 – Sim/action
Knight Gundam

SD Gundam Gatchapon X
V Gundam - Fighting
G Gundam – Fighting
W Gundam – Fighting
Papuwa-kun – Platformer
Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon – Scrolling fighter
Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon R – Scrolling fighter
Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon S – Scrolling fighter

Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon SS Another Story – RPG
Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon Super SS – Fighter
Princess Minerva – RPG
Ranma1/2 Neighbourhood Combat – Fighter
Ranma1/2 2 – Fighter
Ranma1/2 Super/Hard Battle – Fighter
Ranma1/2 Hidden Treasure of the Crimson Cats – RPG
Record Of Lodoss War – RPG
Slam Dunk (1 & 2) – Basketball
Super Dimension Fortress Macross Scramble Valkyrie – Shooter
Super Robot War (1 to 4) – Sim/wargame
Tekkaman Blade – Fighter
3X3 Eyes – RPG
3X3 Eyes – Cinematic adventure
Ultra League (SD Ultraman) – Football
Ushio and Tora – Scrolling fighter



Yu Yu Hakusho – Sim/fighter
Yu Yu Hakusho 2 – Fighter
Yu Yu Hakusho Final – Fighter



Super Gatchapon World SD Gundam X
Super Gatchapon World SD Gundam X2
SD Gundam Psycho
Salamander 2

TRAAAANSMUTE!

Typical, isn't it? No sooner do you get a nice place of your own than a bunch of crustie shamen move into the basement with their odd habits and noisy machines. Then the other members of your party take to popping downstairs for a spot of 'melding with the elemental forces' (so they say), returning later with an odd look about them. Hmmm...

Bit of a Sixties West Coast casualty, is Granny.

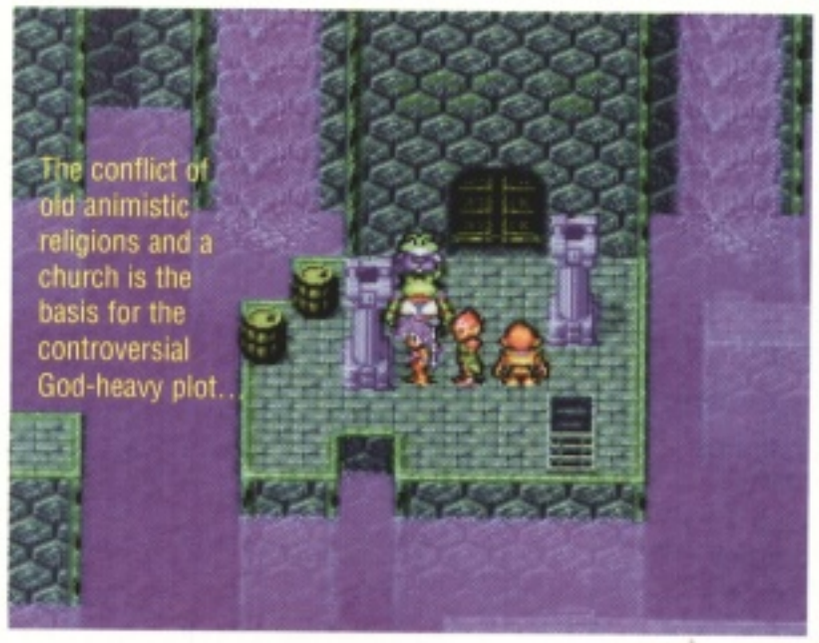
Here I test the merger of Spar and Water...

... and it's a success. New Spar, new abilities.

The hero retains his dragon morph, of course.

If you read game mags other than our humble selves, I have a warning. With a possible UK release in the offing, *BOF2* may come under scrutiny from sources not as 'versed', shall we say, in this odd little cult of a genre. So here's a test to help you avoid confusion from conflicting reports: look at their screenshots, see if they've built any characters as high as level 20, and dismiss them immediately if not. You can't judge a game like this in a morning.

I'll start with the bad news. Capcom USA's translation of Japanese text is possibly the worst I've ever encountered in any video game. When an innkeeper welcomes you to his "motel" (?!?) – even though it clearly says "Inn" on the wall beside him – you know you're in for some serious wince action. Want to go fishing? Then you'd better equip your 'lod'. Ouch.

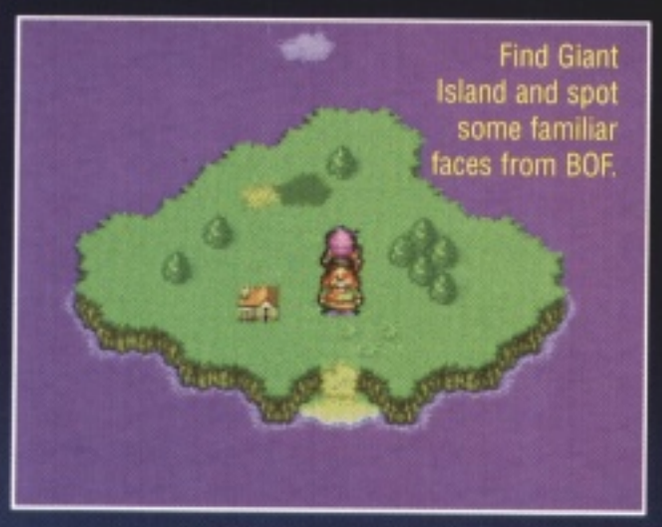


The conflict of old animistic religions and a church is the basis for the controversial God-heavy plot...

Indeed, Capcom's foray into RPG publishing for a Western audience is a bit shoddy as a whole. The accompanying manual fails to explain many curious points (like the Dragon Tears on some text boxes), and one glance at the fold-out map makes you wonder why they bothered printing it. Oh, and the box artwork is classic American fare (i.e. shameful dross that's easily superseded by *Super Play*'s Envelope Art section). But what of the game itself? If you have SP24 then you might check out what I thought of the first *Breath of Fire*, because the style of play is – for better or for worse – identical. Friendly menu-driven combat, superb real-time effects, isometric battle scenes and some likeable weirdness all help to raise *BOF2* above the standard of so many Japanese RPGs that you'll thankfully

You've landed yourself in a gladiatorial combat (right), and the audience favours the catgirl...

They used this idea on *It's A Knockout*. Can Norway stay on the log? A ha ha ha ha...



With the promise of "mildly animated violence" on the box, we settled down for an evening of RPG fun. Several stat-filled days later...

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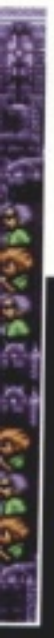

They used this idea on *It's A Knockout*. Can Norway stay on the log? A ha ha ha ha...

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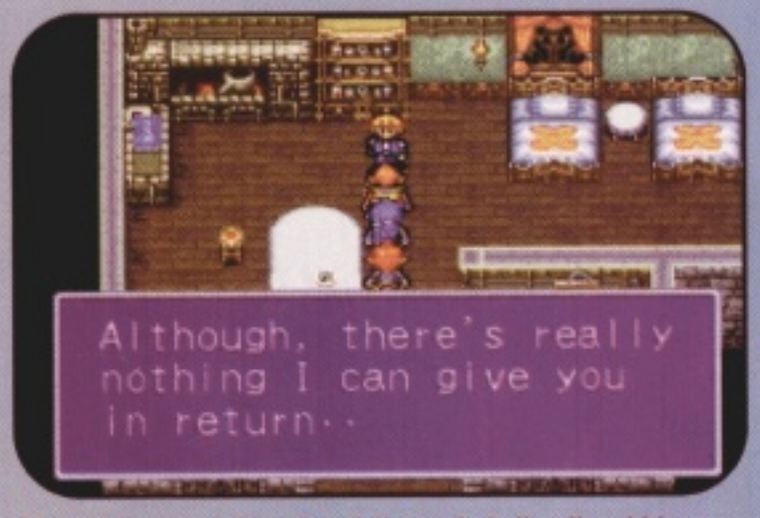
THERE GOES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Creating your own base of operations is a splendid idea, and the novelty of *BOF2* is that you build your own township as the game progresses by inviting characters from other places. This isn't nearly as clever or as strategic as the box suggests, however: on the strength of the blurb I was expecting an *Actraiser*/*Sim City* sub-game of designing and placing shops and inns. Instead, you occasionally meet some lost soul who requests permission to move in to an empty house – and you have no idea how useful their trade is going to be until they've actually set up shop.

Then again, I'm determined to replay the game so that a couple of unwelcome freeloaders get short shrift. I might have anarcho-syndicalist leanings in real life but give me power over little people in a fantasy world and I become the most disturbing social engineer.

I'm turning this bloke down right away. I need an armoury to help me fight demons, not a tuna & mayo sandwich.

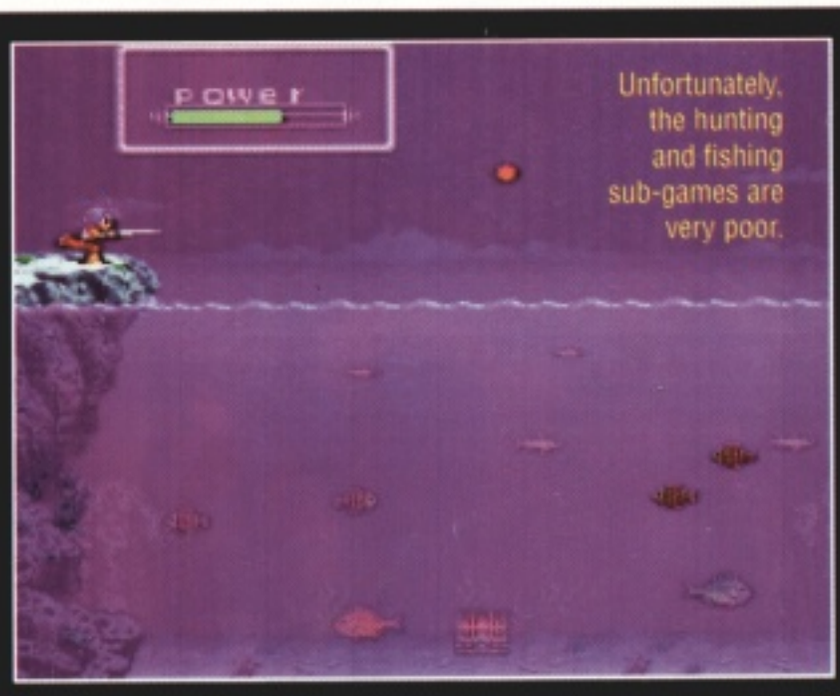


Macotti here was living in a toilet so I gladly offered him a roof over his head. Might have to kick him out, though.

Now this fellow cooks up new items from old ones. Handy.

Look, I built that! Needs a few more houses, though.

Yes, I've found myself the superpowerful secret character (with a bit of help). And I'm not telling you where she is, just yet.



Unfortunately, the hunting and fishing sub-games are very poor.

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Bow	205	144	t	Spl.	n	Lv33
Spar	215	152	o	Item		Lv26

The 3/4 view backgrounds give a strong sense of locale (left).

US Release

Game: Breath of Fire II
Publisher: Marubeni
Developer: Capcom Japan
Price: £65 approx
Release: March
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 20 Mbit & BB

I OF FIRE 2

never see (and if that sounds odd, coming from *Super Play* and all, it's because we only lust after the worthy 10% – Sturgeon's Law is universally applicable).

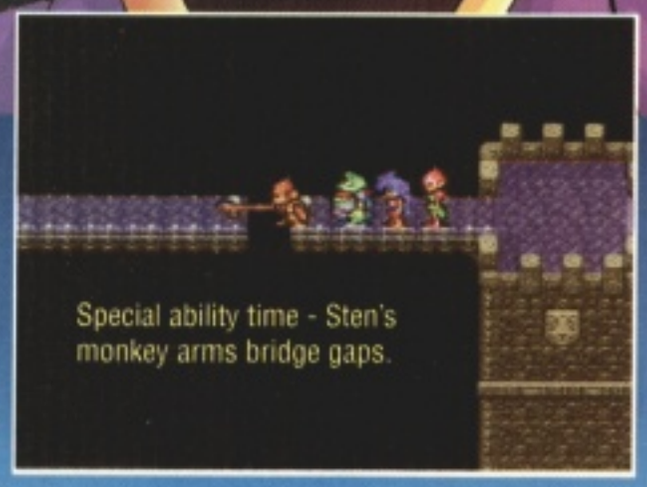
However, the random monster encounters are still too frequent for my liking: in some places your party can't take more than two steps without stumbling into another fight. Exploration of a fantasy world ought to be exciting and challenging, but too often this reduces it to a pad-slinging chore.

It might not be so bad if the combat was engaging, but it's an unfortunate case of bashing away until one side is paté. Magic and special abilities are less important than in *Final Fantasy*, and it's not until late into the game that you get the chance to practice any real strategy. I frequently found myself hitting the Auto Battle option and watching the computer fight things out itself.

A cracking storyline with sympathetic characters is, in my opinion, what raises many Japanese console RPGs above their Western computer counterparts. Thankfully *BOF2*'s characters are much livelier and outspoken than in the original, with many of them given sidestories, but I have to say that the plot never quite gels. Instead of urging things along and stepping up the pace, it digresses and becomes whimsical. Some parts of the game are just plain silly, and I almost lost patience in the SimaFort section.

An unfortunate consequence of so many tangential concerns is that *BOF2* can be vague about exactly what you're supposed to do next. I got completely stuck for a whole day because I hadn't talked to one NPC villager with a particular character in my party: the next scene couldn't happen without this little incident, but there was nothing within the game that so much as hinted at its vital nature. We're going to be tipping this heavily, I can tell.

On the plus side, it has a difficulty level that's welcome after the relative easiness of Square's games. You never



THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

New feature alert! Rarely – and I do mean rarely – you'll see a few odd things happening in the backdrop of a battle. Trees jumping out to attack your enemies, that sort of thing. Imagine my surprise when I first encountered the following roleplay novelty...

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BOF2 can be
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REAL TIME

Exploiting the rich SNES colour palette for some luxurious dusky tones, *BOF2* boasts a 'real-time' world that's effective without restricting your activities to the point of irritation. Day and night pass quickly when you journey across the map screen, but once in town you can savour the rich shades of twilight until booking into an inn. Sorry, motel.

A desert slog through midday sun...

The shade of the town varies with the time at which you arrive. Isn't that lush?

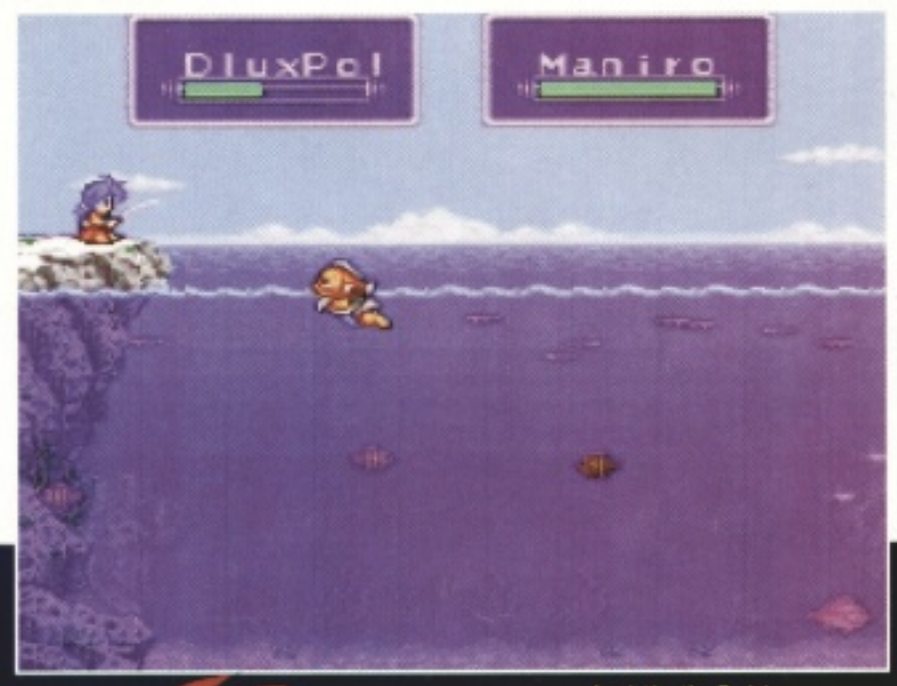
... or a midnight trek across the plains?

have enough money to grab all the best equipment, and whoever filled those treasure chests was a right stingepot. In addition there are plenty of secrets to uncover through thoroughness, backtracking and the occasional brainwave, and you're unlikely to find everything without two or three replays. The monsters become twice as hard with each successive area, and you always approach a new creature with a healthy fear of its potential hero-eating powers.

And that's why I enjoy the taste of *BOF2*, despite its slightly chewy texture. I had to work hard at this review and I haven't seen sunlight for days, but the experience has left me all RPGed out.

Can't think of anything better, meself.

● **Zy Nicholson**



Placing different characters at the head of the party lets you use their special abilities.

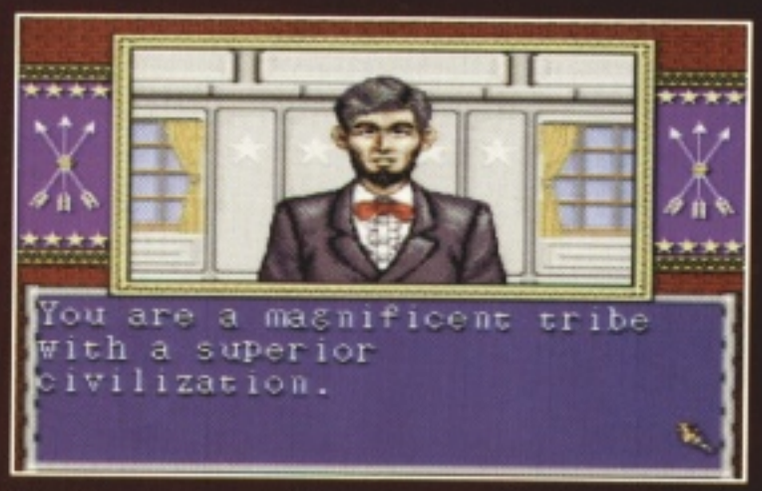
And that's Gobi the merchant – catch him with gold to visit his soggy shop.

BOF2 is a bit short of epic scenes, relying on smaller sub-plots.

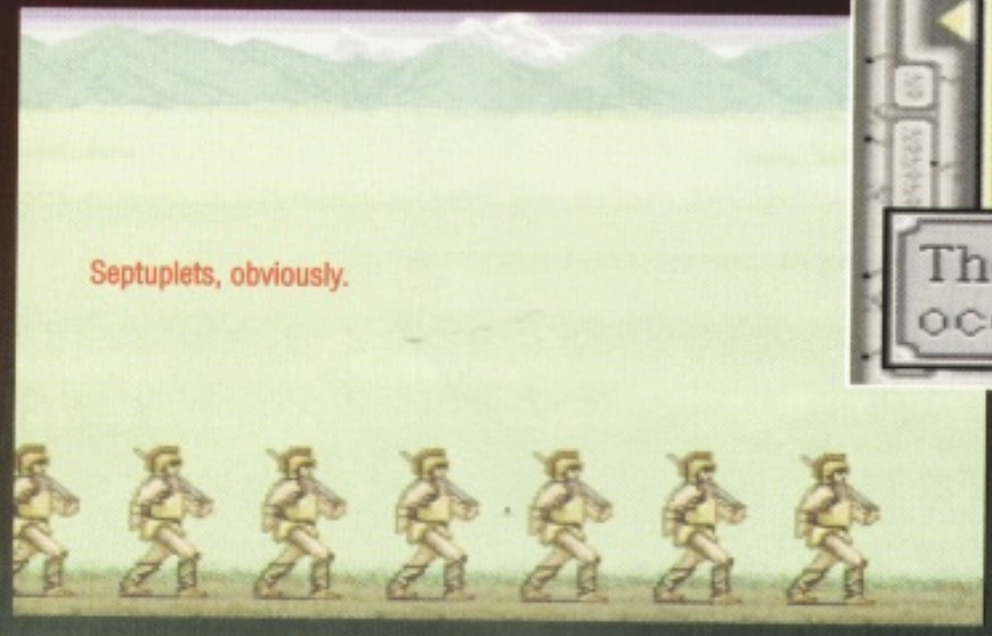
BREATH OF FIRE 2
Capcom

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85%	82%	80%
GAMELIFE	**OVERALL SCORE:**	**81%**
79%		

VERDICT: Don't misunderstand the score – this game has undeniable flaws, enough to put off the novices and the action fans, so I can't recommend it unreservedly. But if you're a hardcore pointy-hat like me then *BOF2* is an essential purchase. Savvy?



Civ features dozens of famous world leaders – Genghis Khan, Stalin, Caesar, and the slightly less brutal Abe Lincoln.



Civilisation is by no means an attractive game. G used to this map – it's where all the action take place. Pretty, eh? And it doesn't get any bette

Ever wanted to lead a huge army across the globe causing mass destruction in your wake? Do it!

CIVILISA

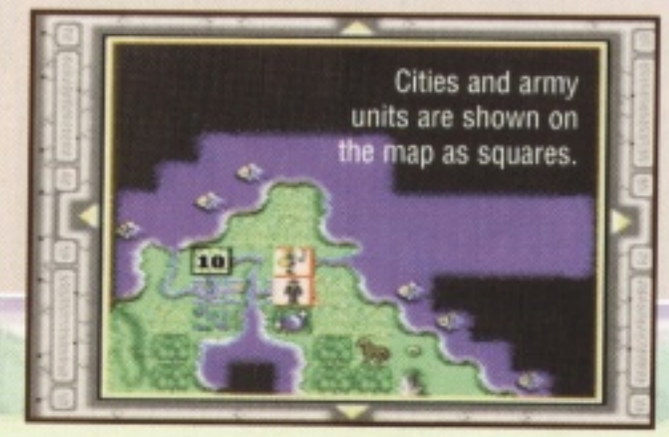
US Release

Game: Civilisation
Publisher: Koei
Developer: In-house
Price: Speak to importer
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 12 Mbit & BB

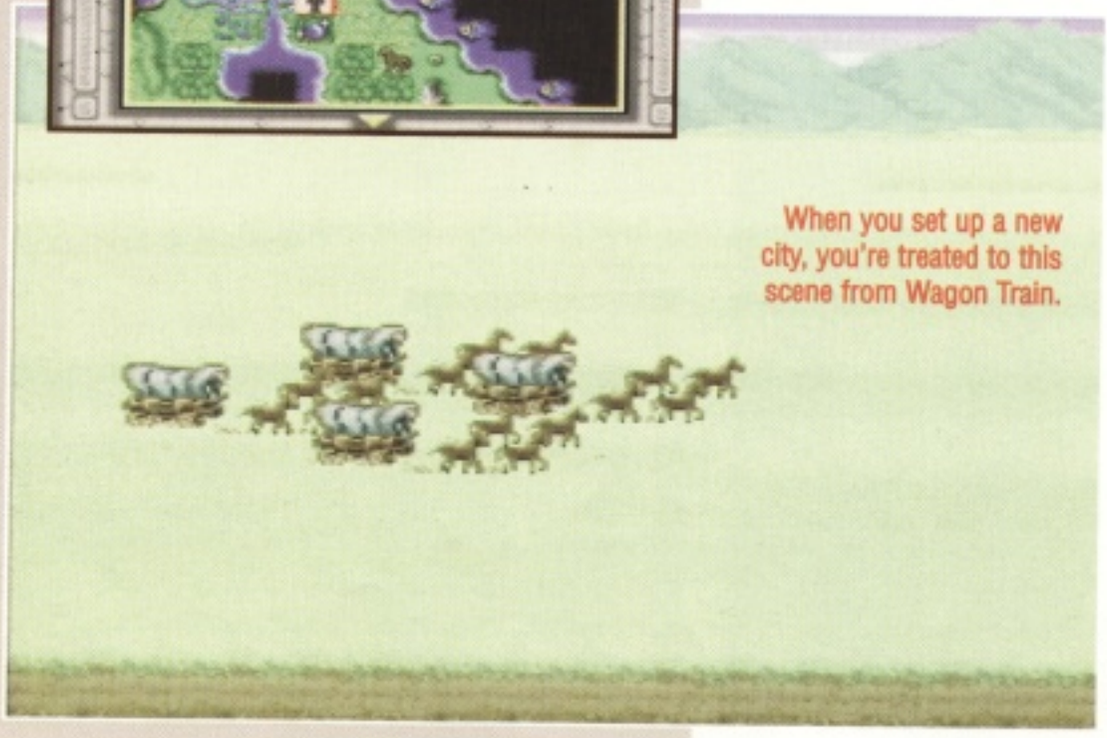
"Don't judge a book by its cover" may well be one of the most boring and mundane clichés mankind has ever produced, but it sums up *Civilisation* perfectly. The game was originally released on the PC several years ago and became an instant classic. Judging by its graphics though, it's hard to see why. However, if anything can get you to ignore surface appearance and appreciate what lies below, this game is it.

You can give each City any name you like. We've opted for the hilarious 'Porky' for our capital.

To some, *Civilisation* will sound extremely boring. It's basically a highly complex strategy game (a kind of cross between the board game Risk and the videogame *Sim City*) which gives you the chance to become ruler of a small tribe and, through your skills as a leader, watch it progress from a prehistoric bunch of thugs to a modern, powerful society.



This is achieved mostly by ordering your tribe's scientists to research progressively more advanced concepts – starting with stuff like the wheel and pottery, and moving on to more dangerous things like nuclear fission and space research. Your main aim is to develop the technology to get into space. If you're not there by 2001, you lose.



When you set up a new city, you're treated to this scene from Wagon Train.

The task is made more complex by the existence of up to seven other computer-controlled tribes who, like yours, all want to be the dominant force on the planet. Therefore much of your time in *Civ* will be spent trading with these tribes, entering treaties or simply amassing huge armies to wipe them of the face of the earth.

The SNES version of *Civ* is almost entirely faithful to the PC original, notable differences being simplified gameplay in parts and a few of the more obscure options having been left out. There have also been a couple of attempts to make this game resemble a *Zelda*-style RPG (simple yet atmospheric music, a mystical intro sequence and short text messages). However, the bulk of the game is the same as it ever was.

As you may have guessed, *Civilisation* is slightly more demanding than your average shoot-'em-up. In fact the game's true depth is simply astounding. Almost every element of human society is

ans an attractive game. G
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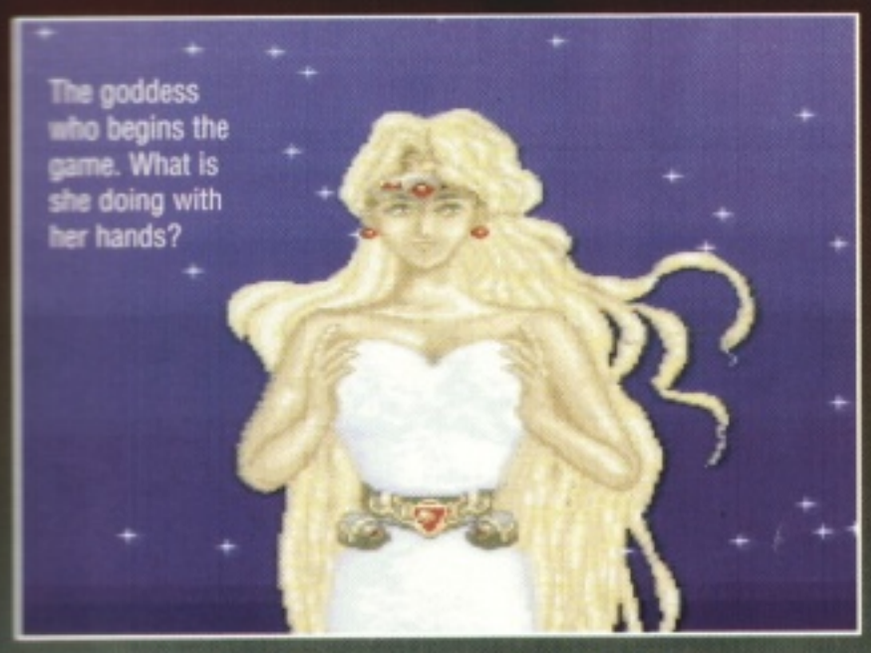
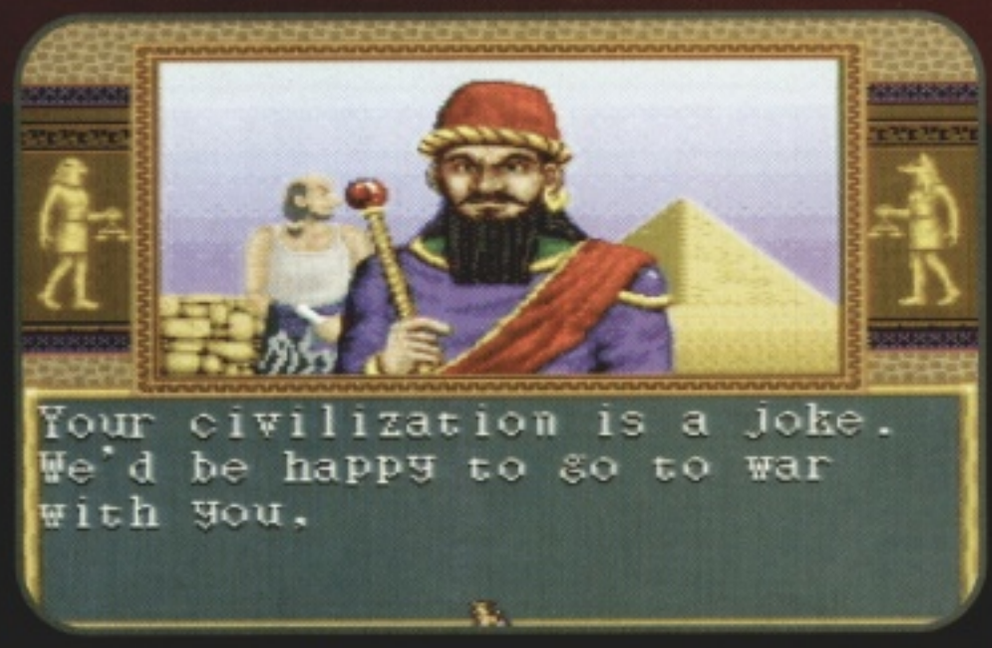
A TION

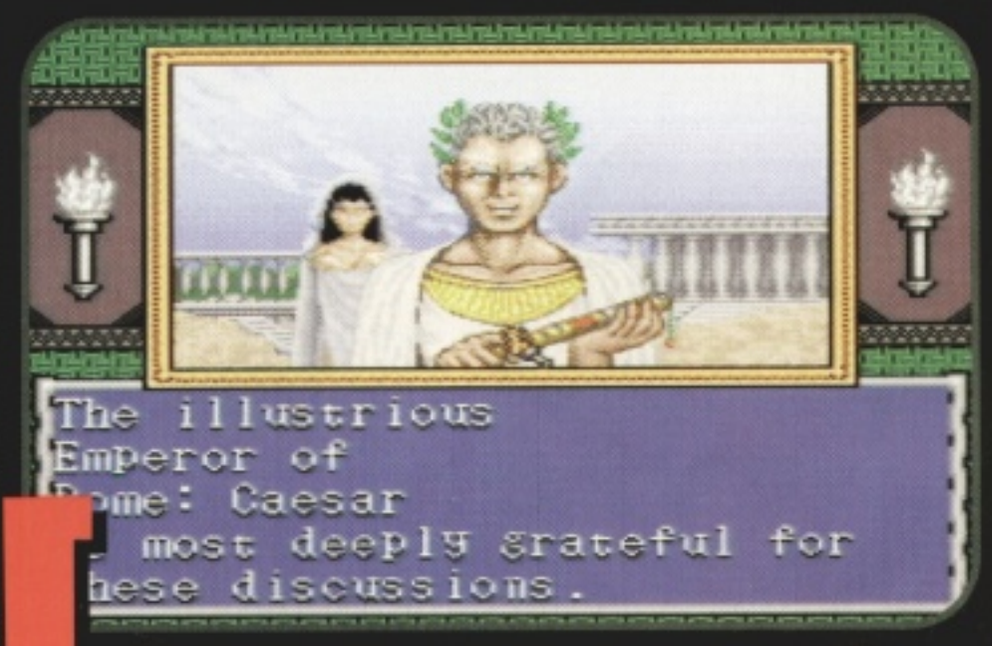
TRUST NO-ONE

One of the main parts of the game involves meeting emissaries from other tribes who will, more often than not, try to intimidate you into giving them lots of your skills and knowledge. They'll also offer you treaties and pacts and promise you life-long friendship. Do not be fooled!





Babalonyia is not one of the most aggressive countries, but they'll still try it



As the game goes on, leaders gain more advisors. Caesar has one...

...Stalin has two dodgy looking chums. Would you trust either of them?

Napoleon is very popular. That doesn't mean you should believe what he says.

name you like. We've
Porky' for our capital.

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simulated here. You can build cities, set up different forms of government, create trade and transport routes, spy on neighbouring countries and even hire diplomats to sabotage them. Most importantly, you can create huge armies (employing cavalry, chariots, or fighter planes, etc. – depending on how advanced your tribe is) and then rampage across the globe looking for fights to get in to.

As a leader you must also keep an eye on your country's domestic situation: are you making enough money? Are your people happy? *Civilisation* always has you thinking about dozens of things at once and you can't afford to ignore anything: one discontented civilian can, if left to his own devices, eventually bring down your whole empire.

One of the most clever things about *Civilisation*, though, is the way in which each new discovery neatly leads on to a new level of gameplay, therefore demanding a whole new set of tactics from the player. Discovering the wheel, for example, means that your tribe can build chariots and catapults taking warfare onto a totally new plane. It also means you can travel further and therefore trade with far-off cities, creating valuable revenue. Everything you achieve, then, makes the game just a little harder.

If all this sounds tedious, it isn't. On the contrary, *Civilisation* is almost worryingly involving and totally addictive. There is nothing quite like the pleasure of tricking another civilisation into a peace treaty only to destroy them minutes later when they've given you all their secrets. It's even more fun when you start developing the really serious weapons like nuclear missiles.

Be prepared, though: *Civilisation* is ugly. For most of the time, you'll be staring at a rather garish 2D map on which there will be a smattering of coloured icons (each representing a unit of tribe members). Gameplay is also rather slow and cumbersome with a complicated menu system employed to provide

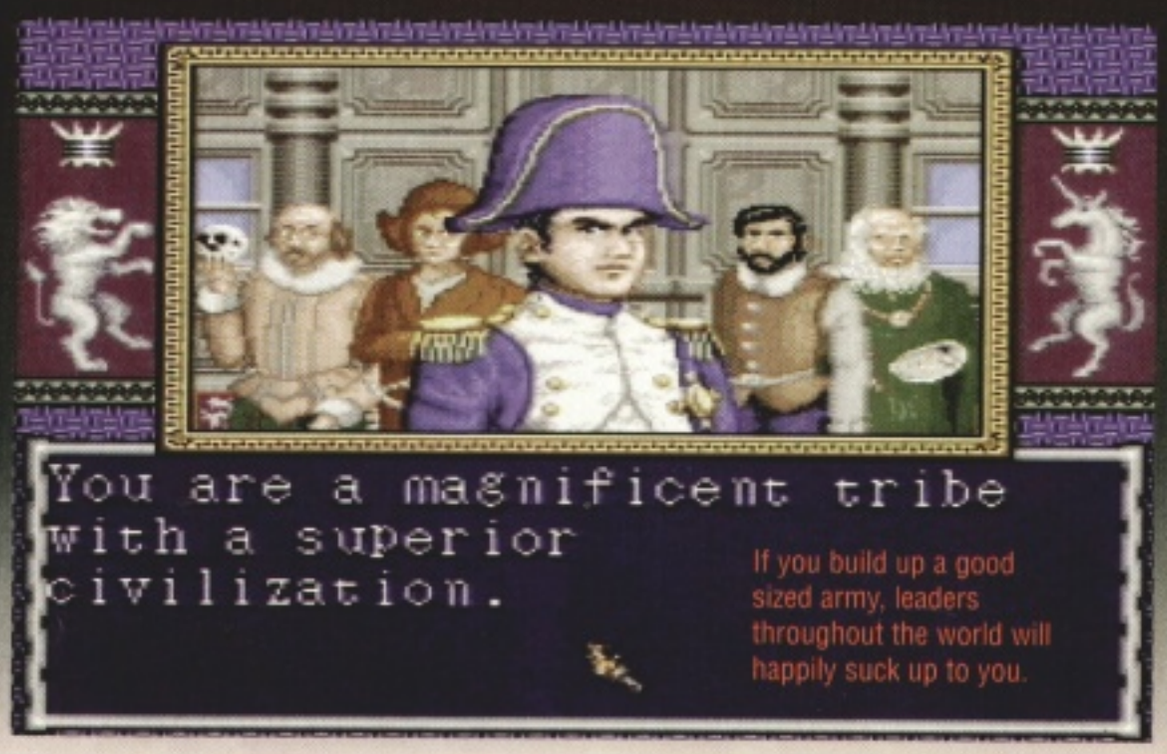
The discovery of the Mexican-styled sombrero "hat" has led to many a man being ridiculed in combat.

ATTACKING ENEMY CITIES

When you first encounter a new tribe, it's usually all smiles and mutual compliments.

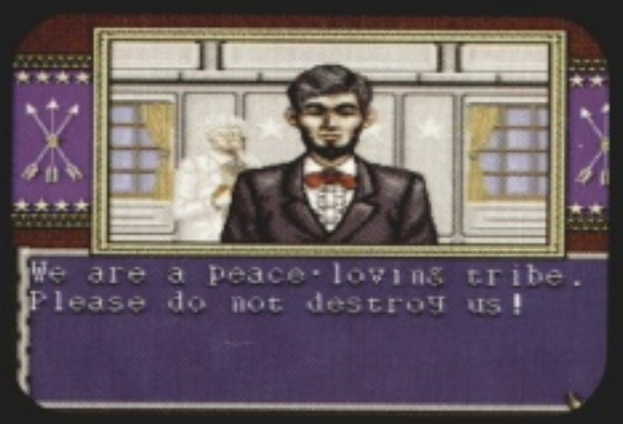
However, if they get on your nerves, send in one of your catapult units...

... and bombard their precious city to rubble.



If you build up a good sized army, leaders throughout the world will happily suck up to you.

Yes, I'll have that, thank you.

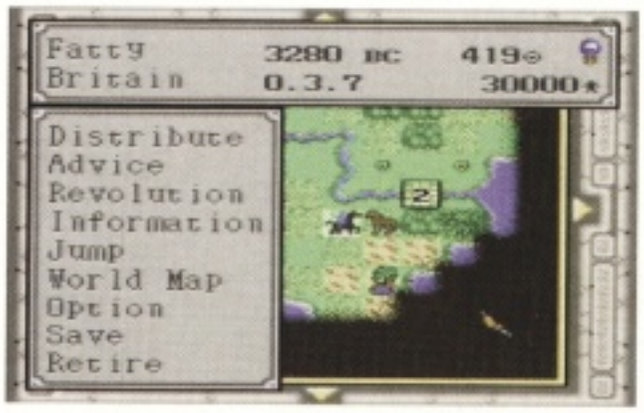


How pathetic!

most of the game's features. Play is also turn based: you get a certain amount of moves in which to send out army units (or diplomats or traders) before your enemies get their go, so if you're obsessed with state-of-the-art visuals and slick, fast-paced action, forget it.

Despite the distinctively unpromising look, *Civilisation* really is in a class of its own.

Civilisation uses loads of menus, which don't help to make the game any prettier...



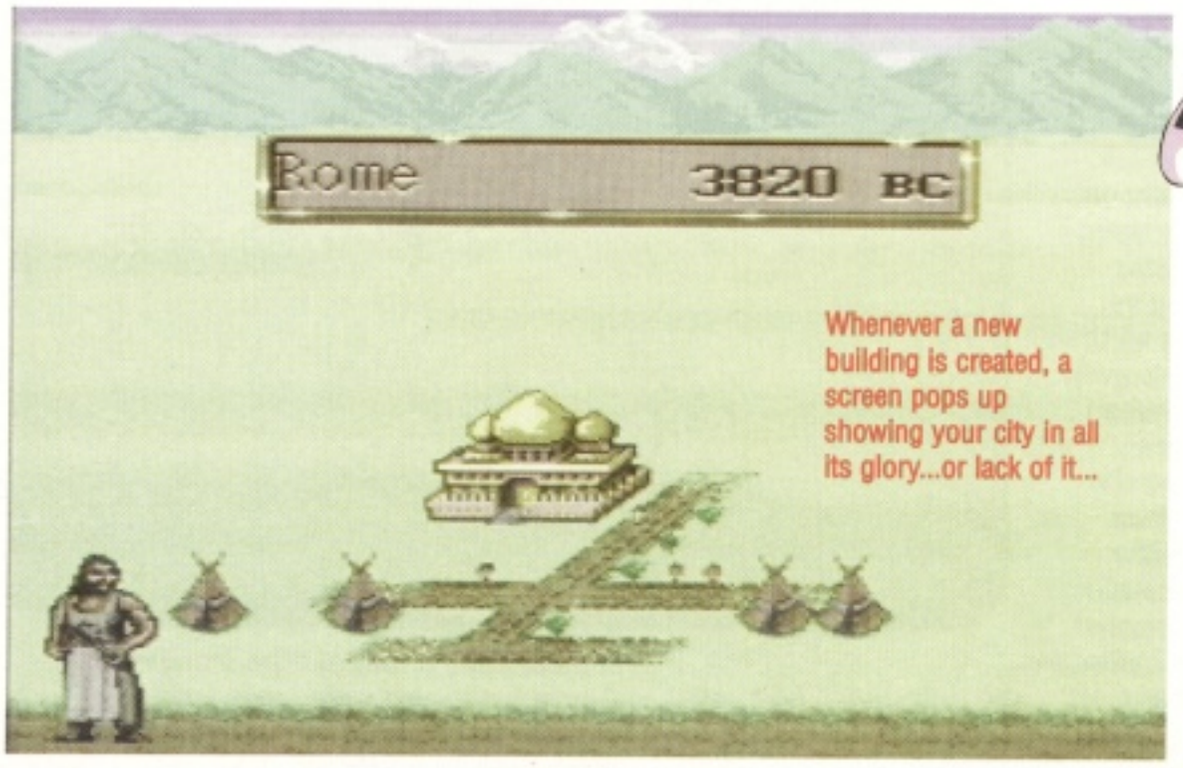
No other game offers the depth and disparity that you can find here and not many can keep you playing for so long. The best thing is that even when you've finished the game, there are so many ways to play it and complete it, you will want to come back for more. And how many titles you can say that about nowadays?

● **Keith Stuart**

CIVILISATION Koei

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
40%	43%	88%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	88%
92%		

VERDICT: Proof that appearances really can be deceptive. A totally absorbing, but very complicated game. Prepare to say goodbye to your social life for many months.



Whenever a new building is created, a screen pops up showing your city in all its glory...or lack of it...

PARODIUS3

Hello, do you like my hat?

Can the man from Konami really stretch a joke this far?

Right. There's this giant hovering bust which only drops its boxing-gloved guard to cup its huge Wonderbra-bolstered chrome breasts and fire semi-guided lipsticks at you from somewhere within its ample cleavage. Also, bear in mind that you're probably a long-legged fairy, or a baseball cap-touting octopus, or a paramilitary penguin or... Well, suffice it to say that Konami have invited Mr Bonkers round for tea once again, and *Parodius 3* is the latest bastard offspring of their shoot-'em-up know-how and unrestrained Japanese deviance.

With the SNES coming to the fruition of its promise and what must be gaming full-stops such as *Yoshi's Island* appearing, the time is obviously right for a last, no-holds-barred outing for the series that started as a parody (geddit?) of *Gradius/Nemesis* and quickly took on a life of its own. One thing we never expected *Parodius* to do was go quietly, and, true enough, this is the best of an excellent series that almost single-handedly kept scrolling shooters alive and blasting on the SNES.

The most important additions are the new characters. Kid Dracula, the bloke with the grey side-burns, has been axed,

Get the right bell and you balloon in size, sacrifice your missiles and become invulnerable. As usual.

as have Michael, the pig with the halo, Mambo, the fat-lipped fish, and Goemon, who's apparently too busy starring in sequels of his own. In their place come a full ten debutants, making a generous total of 16 selectable characters, even if most of the new ones, bar the missile-farting kittens, are tweaked mirror images of the remaining old guard. So now, for instance, as well as Vic Viper, the original Gradius ship, you can also

The very odd megaphone power-up's still here.

An M-16 touting penguin, as you can see.

If you could get this lot to a party it'd be great.

AUTO NAG

Konami's patented Sound Response system, first developed for the Japanese version of *International Superstar Soccer, Perfect Eleven*, is in full effect in *Parodius 3*. What is it? Well, it's an ingenious system whereby Konami shove a little loudmouthed nutter into every single cart. Depending on the on-screen action he'll shout unintelligible Japanese phrases at you. Handy that, and actually pretty funny.

Self-referential's one good way to describe *Parodius 3*. S'pose.

WHAT ARE THEY ON?

Clean-living as Konami's coders probably are, some of the bosses should cast doubt over some of their lifestyles...

A giant karaoke panda that emerges from a gigantic glitter ball and attacks you with its singing.

A sort of pervo Win-bee complete with lipstick attack, pink bra and red high-heels.

ODD, US?

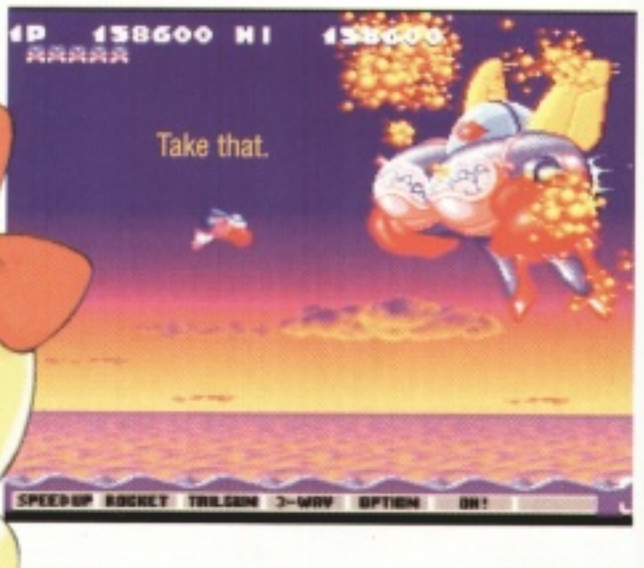
Old faces, new faces, all off their heads.

choose Lord B, a single-nosed variant on the same fighter theme, and Pentaro, the M-16-touting penguin star of the original Gradius, now has a girlfriend, complete with bazooka. And so on.

With each of the characters having different ranges of what amount to very similar power-ups (accessed in the usual way but often in different orders), having a full 16 characters really does add longevity to what is, after all, a fairly simple blaster. Bored with Vic Viper's laser attack? Try Lord B's ripple and multi-shield armoury. It doesn't sound like much and, true, one octopus' missile is another penguin's poton, but it's only with the full range of power-ups zooming around the screen that the game is at its manic blasting best. *Gradius* ushered shooters into the post-Scramble era with a generous helping of readily available weapon boosters and the principle still works today.

What really sets the series apart is, of course, the bizarre look of the whole thing. Purists will love the blasting action for its own sake but the lavish backdrops, now even more mind-bendingly colourful and irrelevant than ever, and the increasingly obscure in-jokery really endear. True game-spods (own up) could spend a worrying amount of their time chuckling at obscure *Lethal Enforcers* samples and references, and the truly anal could probably trace elements to any number of obscure

This octopus actually looks relatively balanced.



(Below) You've got to nip between her legs when she lifts her feet up. Sorry, but it's true.

A Blake's 7ish spaceship that turns into an aggressive clapping clam, naturally.

A huge Goeman head that pops out of a flat pack (chrome) case and has ball arms.

A mannequin that appears from behind some building blocks and waves his fan at you.

TONY SAYS...

Parodius 3's exterior might be slicker than a Brylcreemed quiff but it doesn't hide the fact that the *Gradius* series' gameplay hasn't really changed over about seven years. There's lots to laugh at here, and I enjoyed it at least as much as *Ultimate Parodius*, but wouldn't you rather see those 24 megabits spent on a sequel to *Axelay*? I know I would.

Eat, um, penguin missile you, um, huge malevolent stick-waving octopus.

There are plenty of sections to test just how controlled your flying is. *(Great caption, Will – Ed)*

import releases. We know we have. And let's not forget those bosses. How could we? If the whole game's teetering on the edge of neurosis then these monster sprites are the full-blown gibbering breakdowns in between. Apart from the aforementioned chrome breasts you'll find yourself tangling with a truly creepy mannequin that goes through a series of increasingly worrying fright-wigs, not to mention the huge school bunny-girl (on her friend's shoulders) who attacks you by flicking her hair coquettishly. While miserable little gargoyles fall out of her head and dive-bomb you sporadically.

Owners of *Ultimate Parodius* might think twice about this, because an improvement though 3 is, it's not a huge leap. But *Para* virgins or shooter purists could do a lot worse than put their minds on the line and give this a go.

● **Will Groves**

(Below) Shrink-wrapped schoolgirls?

(Above) You're free! Free to get your head together with professional help.

Beats the biscuit variety any day of the week.

PARODIUS Konami

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90%	80%	82%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
84%		83%

VERDICT: As slick as ever and truly funny in bits but nothing innovative. Just the same timeless blasting gameplay we all know and love.

Japanese Release

Game: Parodius 3
Publisher: Konami
Developer: Team Parodius
Price: £65 approx
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 24 Mbit

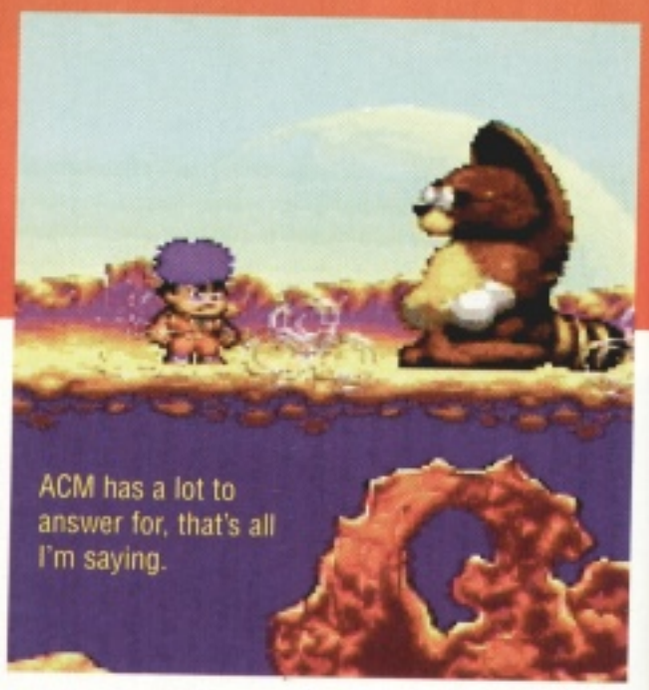
A little girl with no legs floating through space and shooting you with magic hoops, yesterday.

Blast away this very Python-esque exterior to reveal a traitor. Sort of. Perhaps.

Two bunny school girls protected by smaller girls in bubbles and shoulder leaping gargoyles.

GOEMON 4

Blue spiky hairdos, giant raccoon bears and bungee-jumping robotic samurai swordsmen. *Right...*



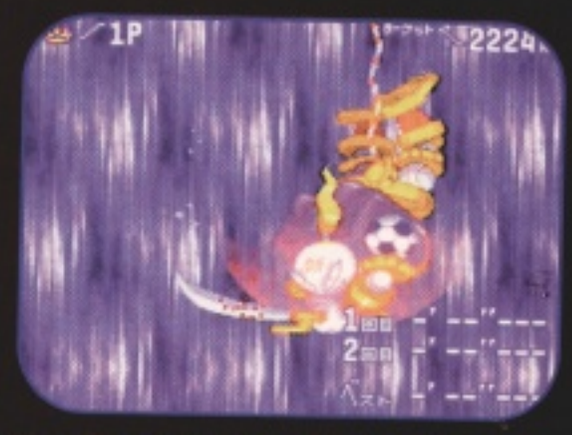
If there's one game that typefies the originality and approach that sets Japanese videogames apart from those being produced by the rest of the world, it's *Legend Of The Mystical Ninja*. It has it all: simultaneous two-player action, original characters, a wealth of subgames, strong graphics and audio support and a quirky and involving storyline – factors which have made it one of the most memorable SNES titles I can, well, remember. (And I can remember a few.)

Nevertheless, it didn't sell in any great number over here which meant that its excellent sequels failed to make it beyond Nipponese shores. Shame.

GOEMON GOES FOUR-PLAYER

Goemon 4 is the first in the series to be multitap compatible. This doesn't affect the main game – you can still only play with two players maximum in the village and platform bits – but three out of the four practiceable boss challenges allow four gamers to indulge simultaneously.

Probably the best of the four, this is a *Puyo Puyo* rip off. The twist is that you get blocks (instead of bubbles) which you have to... Oh look, it's fun okay?



While we're here I'll mention the challenge which doesn't cater for four – the Samurai boss bit where your adversary bungee jumps from a platform in space.

This one's dull. It's a button-bashing affair – the faster you press, the faster you go – with the added bonus of obstacles along the way. Snoooze.

Timing is crucial as you have to raise your arms at the exact moment he's about to slice your Mecha-Goemon in two.

We haven't got a clue whether this is any good or not, frankly, as it's a quiz show thing and I didn't know enough Japanese to get through it. Er, sorry.

If you do manage to grab his blade it's a question of attacking the A and B buttons, Track 'n' Field-style, to shake his grip before his bungee cord returns him to orbit. Cor.

I HAVE SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU

Come with me... come and let me show you some strange things. I found them in this game. I don't really know anything of their significance. In fact it's probably best to not think about them for too long.

"Now, what was it you were wanting, sir? Whole cow's head, wasn't it?"

On the other side of that parked UFO is a geezer firing a cannonball out of his cannon-shaped head.

This happened to me just the other day, in fact. No, *really*, just down the road from the Spar it was...

GOEMON 4

Konami

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90%	85%	84%
GAMELIFE 80%	OVERALL SCORE:	82%

VERDICT: While its format shows signs of age, *Goemon 4* nevertheless provides the avid gamefan with an Aladdin's Cave of 'only in Japan' videogaming. If you see it and you're feeling particularly adventurous (all its text is in Japanese), pick it up.

Right: *Alien* overtones, no?

Part woman, part fish, the girl is the most fun to use.

Wa-hah! Mecha Goemon saves the day once more.

Above: The Hindi symbol of peace no less.

I'll attempt to excuse the rather unfocused start of this review by telling you that if you know the *Goemon* series you'll know what to expect from this chapter and there's little else to be said about it. Its four-player mode proves an entertaining diversion, but the game proper offers the classic *Goemon* structure and little else: explore the village and talk to all its inhabitants, accrue some cash, get stuck because you don't have the object needed in order to pass into the next stage, go back to find it, then go on to crack a typically imaginative and playable platform section.

Great dangers lurk in the forest.

It's all handled competently enough, the selection of obligatory attention-grabbing touches are safely in place, and there's little danger of getting bored, such is its variety. Four games is a long haul in a videogame series, though, and there's no escaping the fact that the formula is wearing a little thin this far down the line. You certainly get a feeling that the designers of the first *Goemon* game have long since moved on from the SNES (to 32-bit platforms, most likely), and the duties for continuing the series have fallen to a less inspired development team who are following what's gone before rather too rigidly.

But this would still make a welcome UK release, and I wish someone would strike a deal with Konami to release their SNES titles over here in the same way Marubeni have with Capcom. Because regardless of how it stands in comparison to the rest of the series, I'd rather see a UK version of *Goemon 4* than the likes of Western-sourced forgettables such as *Frantic Flea*, *Spawn* or *Separation Anxiety*. Oh, and any game which includes a nigh-perfect complete version of the stormingly playable 1982 coin-op *Time Pilot* as a subgame is always going to get a decent mark from a sad old gaming purist such as myself.

● **Tony Mott**

Japanese Release

Game: Goemon 4
Publisher: Konami
Developer: In-house
Price: Speak to importer
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 4 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 24 Mbit + BB

o me just the other *really*, just down e Spar it was...

I don't recognise these fellers from 'round our way, though.

You know things are on the decline when you find a camp merman having a bath in his living room.

Here's the deal... You pick up good-looking fillies and avoid less appetising members of the community...

...until you've collected enough to compete for the right to pass. Original? Yes. PC? Hardly.

...N 4

...y hairdos, ...oon bears ...e-jumping ...samurai ...n. *Right...*

...t typefies the ...ch that sets ... apart from those ...st of the world, ...al Ninja*. It has it ...yer action, ...lth of subgames, ...o support and a ...yline – factors ...f the most ...an, well, ...ember a few.) ...sell in any great ...eant that its ...make it beyond

Those popular poodlesters, purveyors of many a fine rock anthem. If you like that sort of thing...

You have to admit, those window cleaners have done a damned fine job.

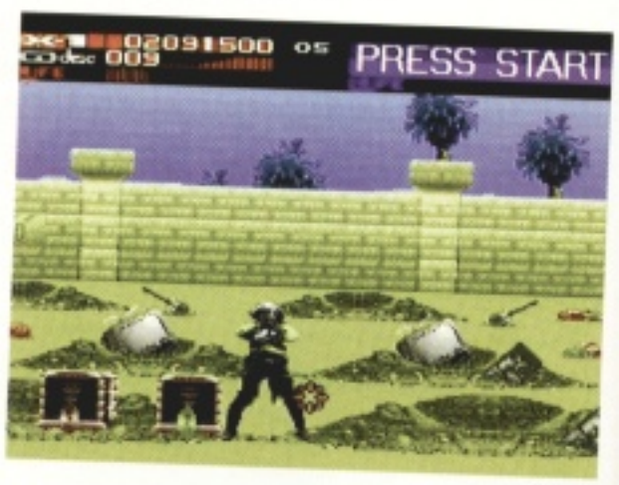
Wahaay – it's Aerosmith. Fill the air with thick, toxic hairspray fumes, squeak into those cellophane jeans and don cowboy boots, young rock warrior, for you have a civilisation to save. The evil NON organisation is out to brainwash the youth of the planet into sad, mainstream, chart-music ways and, as Steve Tyler happily points out, "only you can save us".

So, scarves through belt and drumsticks in hand, off you clomp on a mission that takes you through thick, tropical jungles, pacific chemical factories, the middle east, and even LA's X club, saving hostages soon to be brainwashed into never listening to Aerosmith again (they repeatedly play Big Ones until the victim breaks down).

When Steve growls, "And remember – music is the weapon," he means it – your gun pales next to your stash of explosive

We hope Brad and co take the environment into consideration and use eco-friendly hairspray...

CDs, good for everything from smashing open power-up crates and slicing up NON ninjas. And then there's droogs (whatever 'droog' is), knocking helicopters out of the sky and destroying armoured cars. The violent death mayhem all rocks (eugh) along to various Aerosmith tracks, admittedly constructed from looping samples of Eat the Rich et al. Sounds terribly exciting, doesn't it?



Not content with turnips or carrots, this bloke has cultivated a fine crop of TVs in his yard.

REVOLU

"WE'RE CLEANING UP. AGAIN?"

Aha – you forget. It may be a band, but this is still a licence game. Thankfully, there isn't really a plot to stick to – Aerosmith make their mark by appearing in little digitised video sequences, blaring good riffs over the action and filling the game with a distressing amount of nubile blonde females. At the start of each level you're spurred on by a bandmember, with Steve Tyler and Joe Perry coming out with such classics as "You gotta stop them – they're putting chemicals in our food". It's nice to see *some* popstars warning of the dangers of ingesting chemicals.

One of those evil chemical factories responsible for the state of the planet we live on.

Well, sort of – this long, complicated mission of finding cars, raiding temples, destroying enemy fortresses and defeating killer robots all fits conveniently into one game style – *Revolution X* is a scrolling, first-person shoot-'em-up in the style of *Operation Wolf*. Large, digitised bad guys dance around a scrolling backdrop, hurling bullets, knives and shurikens at you until you blow them away. Occasionally you get a choice of directions and locations, taking on different parts of the mission as you choose. On the whole, though, you're just moving a sight around a screen waiting for things to shoot.

What a pity – a fair bit of time has obviously been put into *Rev X*. The sprites, backdrops, layouts and impressive scrolling corridors show off a huge cart size, but nothing ever really changes after the first level. Droogs (probably a cool 'street' thang) may run on from different angles while you zoom in and out of the many locations, but you don't actually have to do anything other than slide a slightly awkward pointer around the screen and cope with the fact you're being attacked by two people at once. And, with 15 continues, you don't even have to worry about that too much.

So, all in all, a bit of a disappointment. The original coin-op is a lot more fun, with more good music, more variation and a slightly better pointer system – shove a few coins in the slot and have a blast for ten minutes. If you're thinking of shelling out paper for the SNES version, don't – it has close association with Aerosmith's 'Pump' album, if you know what I mean.

● **Simon Forrester**

The dastardly NON organisation will use any means to destroy the likes of Aerosmith.

REVOLUTION X

Acclaim

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
79%	81%	40%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	45%
30%		

VERDICT: It's an arcade game. It belongs in an arcade, where you can blast away for ten minutes then play something else. Venture any further in, and you'll discover how little there is to it.

J TION X

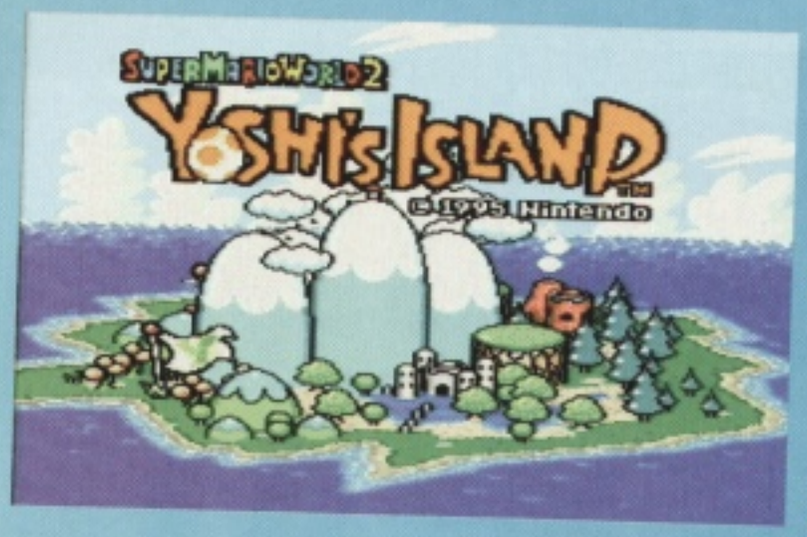
"Something's wrong in the world today, but I don't know what it is. Something just ain't right." That'll be the evil, oppressive NON organisation, then.

Anita Dobson (ex-EastEnder) puts in a guest appearance.

Hollywood hunk Fabbio is reduced to digging over the yard. Ah, justice.

UK Release

Game: Revolution X
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Software Creations
Price: £45.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 2
Cart ROM: 24 Mbits



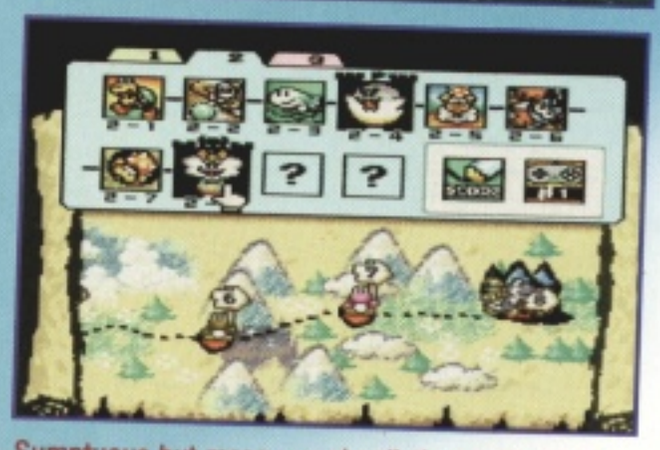
Diddy's Kong Quest and Yoshi's Island. Two of the finest games the SNES has ever seen. Both platformers. Both sequels. One produced here in Blighty, the other in Japan. General opinion firmly states Yoshi to be the better game, yet in some places Donkey Kong Country 2 has been outselling Nintendo's in-house-produced title at a ratio of at least two to one. This calls for a Super Play investigation.

KONG V

EAST VERSUS WEST

The best videogames have always come from Japan. It is the birthplace of such landmark titles as *Space Invaders*, *Pac-Man*, *Donkey Kong*, *Space Harrier*, *Street Fighter II* and *Virtua Fighter*. The UK has traditionally occupied a lower rung on the ladder, but its standing has been elevated in the past few years thanks to the efforts of companies such as Rare, whose graphical achievements alone have given the SNES an enormous boost in recent years.

So, in 1996, how far behind Japan *is* the UK? The UK's finest 16-bit codeshop, Rare, have effectively gone head-to-head with an in-house Nintendo team headed up by a certain Shigeru Miyamoto thanks to the simultaneous release of *Diddy's Kong Quest* and *Yoshi's Island*. Which gives us a perfect opportunity to pit them against each other in an East versus West-type arrangement. Looking at both games by category we can examine the specific differences between the two. Maybe we'll even find out why more SNES owners have been buying the weaker game...

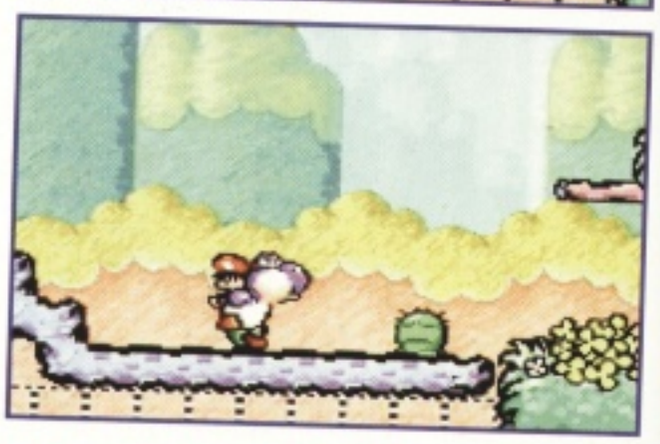


Sumptuous but messy, or simplistic yet effective? The differences are clear.

GRAPHICS

Quest begs to be discussed first when we're talking graphics. We already knew what to expect from it in this department: lush 256-colour backdrops, silky animation and a host of cleverly-programmed spot effects. With its remarkable lens flare technique, the original *Earthworm Jim* set the standard for jaw-droppy graphical set pieces; Quest picks up the ball from where Jim left it and runs with it. The atmospheric bad weather bits early in the game and the startlingly effective sunlight-through-the-trees effects later on demonstrate Rare's total mastery of the SNES's graphics capabilities. Hat-doffing must also be granted the underwater levels, whose backdrops (the galleon interiors) use an amazing routine to generate a pseudo-texture-mapped-polygon floor, middle section and ceiling. Rare maintain that the only use of Mode 7 appears during the game's opening sequence – on the Rare logo itself – meaning that the effect is generated wholly in software. Very clever.

Animation is taken for granted nowadays, only ever receiving attention if it's particularly poor, but Quest's is an example of the art worth close attention. Play the game using the slow-motion facility on a suitable joypad and you'll begin to appreciate how much attention was lavished upon this game's looks: each and every creature, from beetle to big bugger boss bloke, moves with mercurial fluidity – watch Rattly the snake as he bounces up and down; the coiling and uncoiling of his body as he moves is remarkable. Even superfluous details, such as Diddy's idle routine, where he juggles, call upon more frames than you'll get down the local snooker centre on a Friday night.



Check out this little guy. He's all happy when his mate's around, but steal him away and... awww.

VS YOSHI

WEST : A CASE STUDY

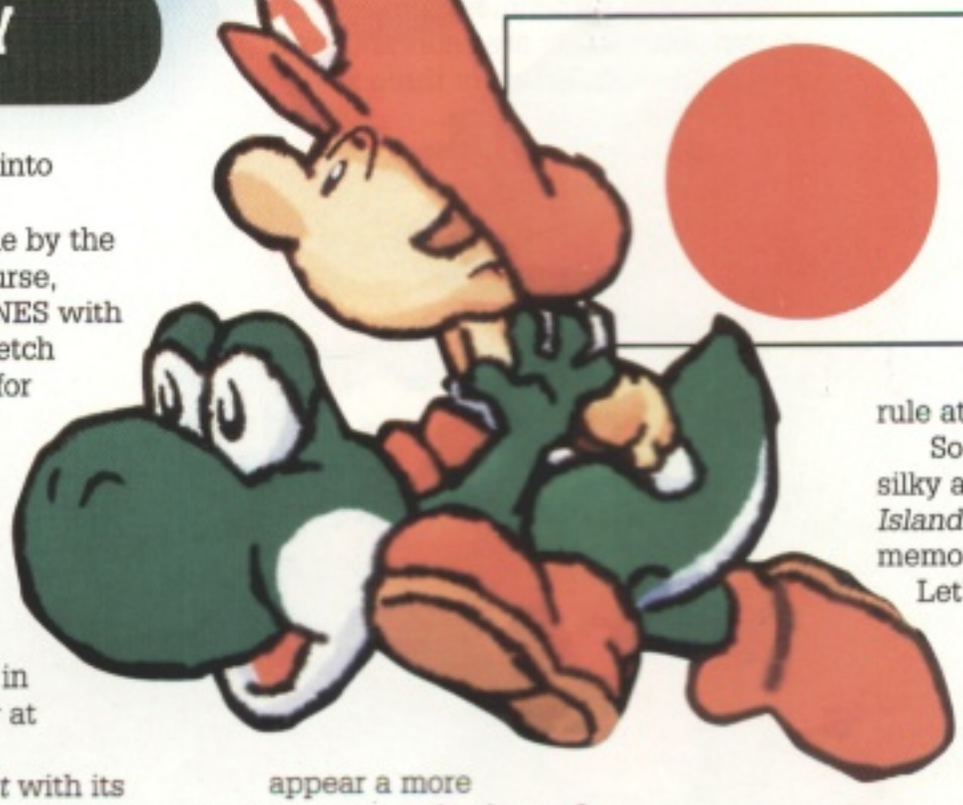
With less varieties of platform, Quest is often the easier game to follow – its clear barrel-labelling certainly helps.

Elsewhere, both the animated and static backdrops, which accompany the main level maps and characters' home screens respectively, are of the standard Rare set in their former Kong outing, and act as the juicy cherries upon the mouth-watering chocolate gâteau base.

On the face of it, *Island* is the Winona Ryder to *Quest*'s Pamela Anderson – less glossy and shimmery but at the same time more, well, interesting. While Rare's approach is in-yer-face and immediately gratifying, Nintendo's is more subtle – although it frequently pulls tricks out of the bag to turn what is comparatively pedestrian viewing into spasm-inducing stuff.

These have been made possible by the inclusion of a Super FX chip, of course, whose extra oomph endows the SNES with the ability to rotate, shrink and stretch sprites at will while also allowing for spot polygonal effects. Seeing the SNES and SFX at full steam, well, put it this way: if the argument was still which machine can deliver the biggest flicker-free sprites and not which can throw around the most polygons per second, *Island* would be exhibit A in the case for the SNES's supremacy at its level.

Island scores points over *Quest* with its remarkable attention to detail. While Rare's game has a fair dollop of details which most



Both games have two types of bonus bits: action and strategy, but *Island*'s have the edge, clearly.

developers wouldn't even consider – the splashes created when you knock a baddy overboard, for example – Nintendo's rewrites the rulebook. Which other game do you know that features little birds and froggies that happily go about their business and serve no purpose other than to make itself appear a more complete piece of software?

Nintendo's graphical artists are especially good at imbuing mere collections of pixels with personality, and the range of characters throughout Island represent some of their most charming yet. From the bashful Boos out of *Super Mario World* to the Shyguys from *Super Mario Bros. 2* there are familiar faces galore, but new additions such as the tubby Santas, the wingless white birds and the lava and water monsters could well become as popular as Koopa Troopas.

It's harder to give a computer-rendered character personality than it is one rendered by hand – consider *Street Fighter II*'s Blanka in comparison to *Killer Instinct*'s Fulgore:

Is this the biggest sprite ever seen in a SNES game? We think so.

Rare's combatant may have the larger set of claws but he's videogaming's equivalent of John Major by overall comparison. *Island* and *Quest* illustrate this perfectly. While Nintendo have been able to deliver level after level of outrageous foes (and friends too), Rare's equivalents tend to pass by somewhat unnoticed. In fact *Quest*'s most striking character is neither Dixie or Diddy but Funky Kong.

Although he confirms what we already know (that it's nigh impossible to wear a bandana without looking a complete and utter tit) he has charisma well in excess of that of the two leads proving that it *is* possible to give rendered characters 'life', it's just the exception rather than the rule at the moment.

So. *Quest*: gobsmacky rendered stuff, silky animation, revolutionary spot effects; *Island*: groundbreaking sprite handling, memorable characters, enormous variety.

Let's call this round a draw.

DK:9 YI:9

SOUND

There is an elite handful of sound engineers who know enough about the SNES to get anything listenable out of it, and both Rare and Nintendo pay the wages of some of them.

Island's soundtrack is memorable for two main factors. First, the main control screen uses a sequence which is not only an almost note-for-note replica of an old Kwik Save TV advert ("Be a liquor saver, liquor save at Kwik Save" – remember?), but also scarily similar to the main hook in that song from last year by tedious Oirish warbler Enya (go on, listen to it). Second, it features one of the most infuriating sound effects ever spewed forth by a game – yes, that of baby Mario crying his stupid little eyes

out when he becomes separated from his steed.

The word 'bouncy' could have been invented for platform game music and *Island* sounds totally typical of the Mario series, even going so far as to use very-slightly-tweaked versions of voices first heard over five years ago in *Super Mario World*. It's sad that its audio content should be so much less adventurous than its graphics, but this is also true of *Quest*. Although it includes some masterful touches – the snapping piranha FX, the spaced-out game-save-screen loop and the great Casio Tone-style drum track in Kong Kollege, for example – there's little to compare to the super-chilled track from the underwater sections of its forefather.

Neither game demonstrates the true abilities of Nintendo and Rare in this department – *Quest* fails to build dramatically on what was achieved in *DKC* and *Killer Instinct*, while *Island* plainly lacks the hookability factor of *Super Mario World* despite its sometimes ingenious instrumentation.

Another drawn round.

DK:8 **YI:9**

GAMEPLAY

Generally speaking, the skills you pick up playing one platform can be directly applied to the next example you play. Which means, of course, that platform games start to become easier the more you play – it's like learning to drive, yes? – and it's for this exact reason that so many people finished *Sonic 2* within hours of purchasing it and why everyone complained after conquering the original *DKC* in super-quick time. The solution is obviously to deliver a platform game which – shock! – plays like no other that has gone before it. It's something that *Island* goes to great pains to achieve; *Quest* has a more difficult time distinguishing itself.

It's easy to envisage the early design meetings at Nintendo when they set out to create A New Kind Of Platform Game just over four years ago. The jumping-on-heads gameplay which had been invented in *Super Mario World* had been cloned a hundred times over since its arrival in 1985, and Shigs and his boys had to do something *new*. They obliged with Yoshi's ability to collect and throw

Once of Quest's most eye-catching bits is this torch-wielding fish who illuminates your path. Mmmm.

eggs – something which forms the cornerstone of *Island*'s gameplay, whether it's in targeting bosses' weak points or blasting your path through a chunk of rock – and of course the Mario-saving element whose 'protect the helpless' theme was almost certainly stolen from *Lemmings*, a hit game from the West at the time.

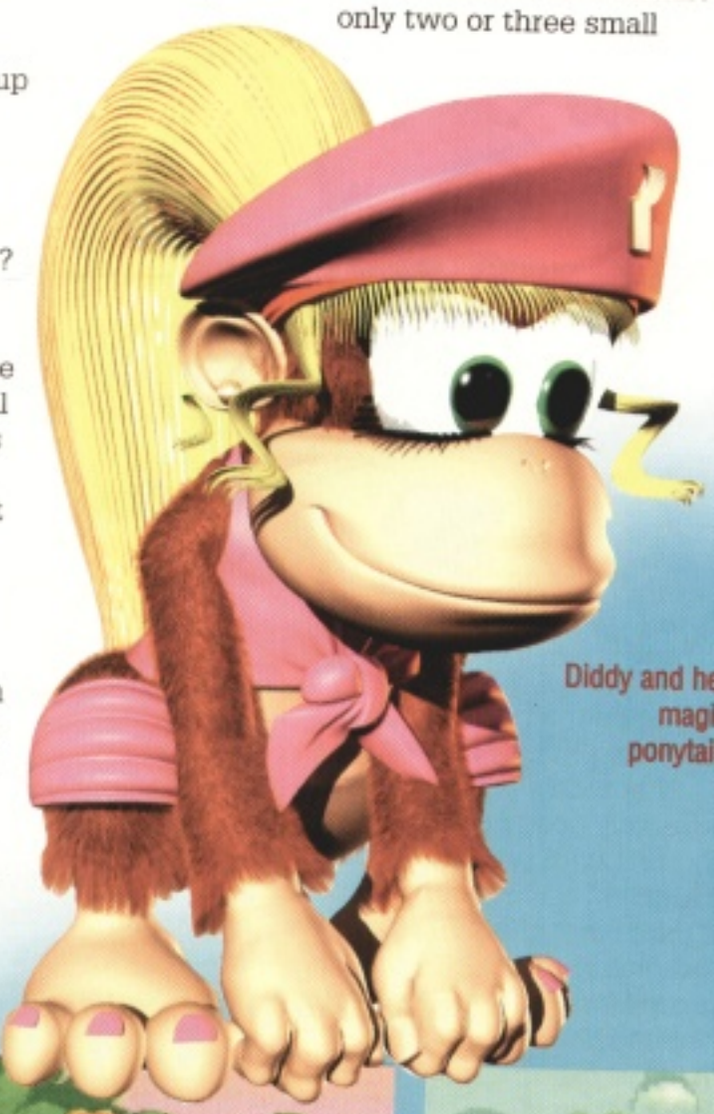
Island is the less regular of the two: its graphical style buggers around all over the place throughout its 54 levels, sometimes being classically Mario with bright, bold backdrops and sometimes pastelly and sketchy. Some levels are short and consist of only two or three small sublevels tagged together while others weigh in with sprawling levels linked by locked doorways. It seems as though if it looked right on paper – which is where Shigs traditionally puts in a great deal of his input – it went in the game, with no regard given to working to grid-based or linearised layouts in order to keep a game nice 'n' tidy and easily manageable from the programmer's point of view.

Quest is found closer to the other end of the scale, with just about everywhere you're asked to go slotting into place as you'd expect. It reprises exactly the style of gameplay which Nintendo so eagerly attempted to get away from: a platform here, a baddy there, perhaps a hole or two which you must avoid falling into. Add a neat line in animals which help you out along the way à la *DKC*, a minecart ride or two and some peripheral gameplay trimmings and you have a sound example of a Good Solid Platformer, nothing more.

An important difference between the two games is their comparative range of characters and their respective behavioural patterns. *Quest*'s nasties appear a very limited bunch when looked upon in the light of *Island*'s encyclopaedic array of bad guys. You never know what to expect from the next new adversary: can it be eaten and turned into an egg? Can it be killed with eggs? Does it fire projectiles? If so, are its projectiles targettable? Can it deflect *your* projectiles? Will it hurt you if you stand on it? Does it move in groups of its same kind? Does it break down in size when stamped on? And so on and so on.

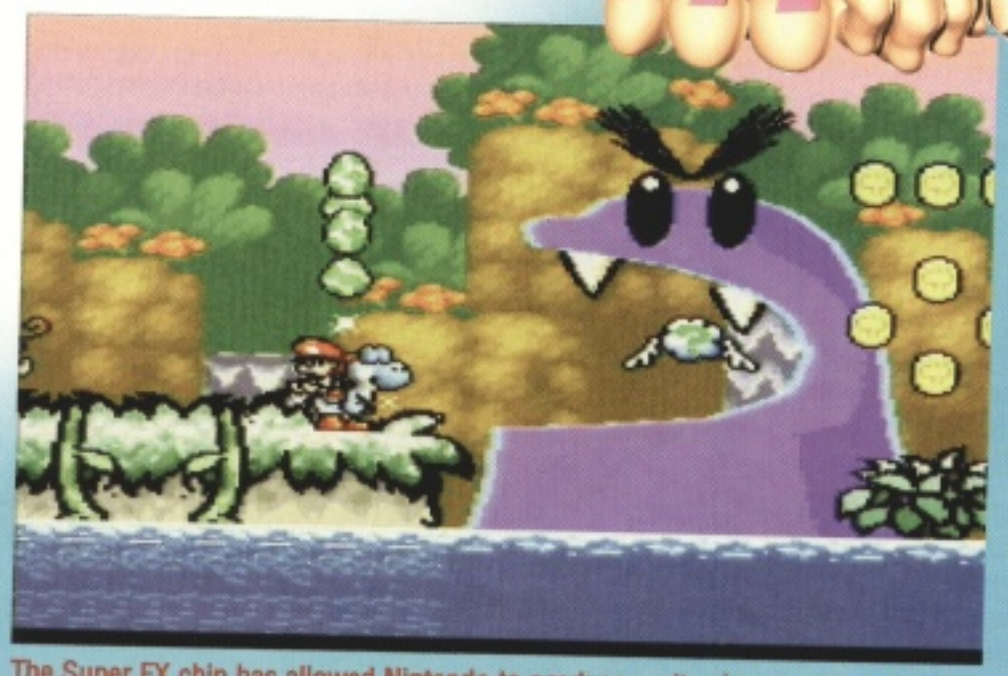
In difficulty terms, *Island* is the easier game to get to grips with but not the easiest to truly master: getting a perfect score in *Super Mario World 2* is more difficult than it is in *Donkey Country 2*. To achieve such a finish on both games you have to search out countless hidden bonuses and Island's are more cunningly secreted than those in the Kongster's world.

Thankfully, *Quest* is significantly more tricky than its parent (a fact that Nintendo worryingly acknowledge on its packaging with a message from Kranky Kong stating "and they remembered to put some difficulty in this time!"), and both games offer challenge enough to make them worthwhile exchanges for 40 green ones.



Diddy and her magic ponytail.

DK:8 **YI:8**



The Super FX chip has allowed Nintendo to produce sprites in every shape and size imaginable. We have fingers crossed for a SFX-charged *Super Metroid II*...

Two little frogs (between Yoshi and the stump) – one blue, one red. They serve no real purpose other than to liven things up. That's a Nintendo game for you.

Rattly is one of *Quest*'s more memorable characters. Nice coils, snake-bloke.

It's only fair that we let Shigs and his crew have the last word. Just gets you right there, doesn't it.

PRESENTATION

Japanese programmers were setting the agenda for videogame front-ends as far back as the early '80s and have been refining it ever since. Their clean, clear and often clever approach is exemplified in *Island*, while *Quest* comes across as quite scruffy in places.

Island's prequel, *SMW*, was a turning-point in user-friendliness. Its information blocks (which briefly describe upcoming sections that will require the player to use a new skill or whatever) made it to *Island*, although now they include chalkboard-style diagrams along with text. Nintendo's aim, presumably, was to make the game accessible to even the most virginal gamer, and they've achieved it convincingly. *Quest* also goes to great pains to ease the player into the action but doesn't try to interweave advice in the game proper, rather it provides members of the Kong family to dole out clues and info, often at a cost. Apart from being a clumsier way of introducing it, there's also the problem of the advice being delivered in piddly little white-with-black-outlines text placed over 256-colour backdrops – hardly the most eye-friendly scheme ever devised.

Island's map screens outshine *Quest*'s too. The Kongster may have sumptious backdrops over which the playing areas are laid out but he has nothing to compare to *Yoshi*'s cameo-like representations of each section and the parchment-style scroll on which the map is painted, which can be furled and unfurled to examine levels in their entirety. Silly perhaps, swish definitely, irrelevant absolutely not.

The significance of presentation as part of the videogame package may be pretty slim compared to its graphics or gameplay, but it remains one of the most telling factors in setting apart games from the West and the Japan. Look close enough and you'll see the differences.

DK:7 **YI:9**

TOTAL SCORE
DKC: 32 ● YI: 35

CONCLUSION

We obviously haven't got enough space to strip down these games completely but the differences which set them apart should be clear. In concluding we must consider that this isn't a truly fair test of each developer's abilities: *Quest* was completed within a timescale of 12 months (because Nintendo wanted a big SNES title for release at Christmas '95), while *Island* was afforded the luxury of a four-year development period, and was ready for release only when Nintendo felt they had polished it until they were happy with it, not because of any projected big-sales period.

As mentioned earlier, being the weaker game appears not to have affected *Quest*'s sales performance, and it would appear that the core buying public care little for how long a game's been slaved over by some group of programmers nor how the choices available have been received by the industry's 'experts' (see SCORES ON THE DOORS just below), preferring instead to reach out and grab the prettiest-looking thing on the shelf.

Quest has also had the benefit of a TV advertising campaign, however, and we shouldn't underestimate the power of the tube – *Island*'s TV ads should be running by the time you read this, and it should be interesting to see if its sales begin to pick up.)

At the end of the day two things are clear. First, *Yoshi's Island* is a lesson in technical innovation, graphical expertise and truly ingenious playability that the entire videogaming fraternity would benefit greatly from studying.

The second is that if that same group can't quite manage genre-elevating content elsewhere, they should at least make sure they include graphical content so gorgeous it makes gamers go all funny in the trousers, 'cos there are more than enough of them around who'll appreciate that part of the deal at least.

SCORES ON THE DOORS

So who is telling what to whom? Time for a bit of informative chart action.

	Diddy's Kong Quest	Yoshi's Island
Super Play	82%	94%
TOTAL!	90%	94%
Nintendo Magazine System	97%	97%
Edge	N/R	9/10
GamesMaster (magazine)	90%	95%
Ultimate Future Games	87%	91%
Computer & Video Games	94%	97%
Gamepro (UK edition)	94%	96%
Game Players (US)	94%	76%
Gamefan (US)*	N/R	100/99/100
Digitiser	84%	95%
Bad Influence**	5/5	5/5
Electric Circus	97%	95%

* Gamefan use a three reviewer system, each giving marks out of 100. DKQ yet to be reviewed at time of writing. Their score for the original DKC was 100/100/100 (out of 100).

** Bad Influence give two scores; one from the boys and one from the girls. Er, presumably in order to prove girls play videogames too, or something.

SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

YOSHI'S ISLAND

Nintendo (UK/US/JAP)
By Zy Nicholson

Join up with the Zyster as he takes us on a whirlwind tour of Yoshi's Island. So fasten your seatbelts and prepare for a bunpy ride off the beaten track...

The aim of this guide is to help you with those tricky levels where you might be short of a 100% completion. I've assumed that you're not unfamiliar with Mario and that you're competent enough to find the more obvious treasures and bonuses, but if you're still having trouble with any level then write to us and explain your problem in detail. Although we can't (and don't want to) rule out the possibility of more hidden bits, we're confident this is the most comprehensive *Yoshi* guide to date.

WORLD 1

1-1

A pleasantly easy level welcomes you to Yoshi's Island. Most of the Red Coins are below the pipe beyond these two Piranha Plants (2). Roll the Chomp Rock (3) along the cavern floor to reach the coins. The best kept secrets are to the left of the sunflower. You'll find another flower here, and between the two quartz outcrops is a hidden ?-cloud (1).

GENERAL TIPS

We've already printed tips for 1-Up loops (on levels 1-7 and 5-4), plus the code for accessing bonus games, which can help you get those 100% ratings. See last issue (SP40) and this month's Mode 7.

You can cheat a bit on perfect level ratings if you have a 10 or 20 Point Star in your inventory. When you find yourself at the end of the level with all the Red Coins and Flowers but you're short of 30 Stars, just use the Star bonus before you jump through the Goal hoop. Boss levels, however...

If you're skilled enough with the Yoshmeister's tongue you can often upgrade his green eggs to yellow or even red. Just bounce them straight off a hard ceiling and catch them again with a well-timed slurp. A flashing egg contains one of the level's Red Coins, so don't shoot it off into space. The giant egg turns all nearby enemies to +1 Stars, much like the Anywhere POW item, but Yoshi will lose his balance if you spend too long aiming one.

Red Coins and Winged Clouds are often concealed in wooden posts, even if those posts serve some other purpose (such as blocking in monsters). You should always take the opportunity to pound them into the ground, completely flat, to search for hidden items.

Stock up with a half-dozen Size 1 Spotted Reds for a steady flow of +1 Starry Men.

If you inspect the screen closely enough you'll be able to distinguish Red Coins by their faint reddish tinge around the base. If not, turn up the colour on your TV. It works, honest.

You don't need to push a Chomp Rock to move it. If you find one stuck against a wall just stand on the outer side and, thanks to a rather nifty physics model, your weight will slowly start it rolling.

Remember that you can always shoot Red Coins, Flowers and even Mario's bubble to collect them. Yoshi's tongue is invaluable for reaching eggs, dropped coins, +1 Stars and the little babby.

1-2

If you jump off the ledge with the helicopter morphing bubble and walk right until you can go no further, you'll discover a hidden 1-Up cloud at the bottom of the level, near the Yoshi Block (4).
You can morph as many times as you like to explore this area. There are two flowers to collect (7, 8) and three Red Coins in the top right (5). Don't miss the two Coins above the exit pipe (6).

IDE

Nintendo (UK/US/JAP)
By Zy Nicholson

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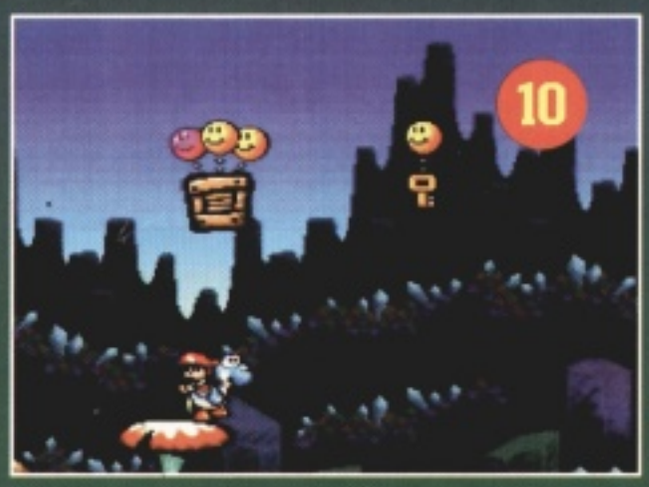
1-3 Roll the second Chomp Rock down to the first Flower to uncover a Winged Cloud (9).

The key to the Bonus Room is carried overhead by a Balloon. Be sure to look up and be ready with an egg when you approach the three adjacent wooden stumps (10).

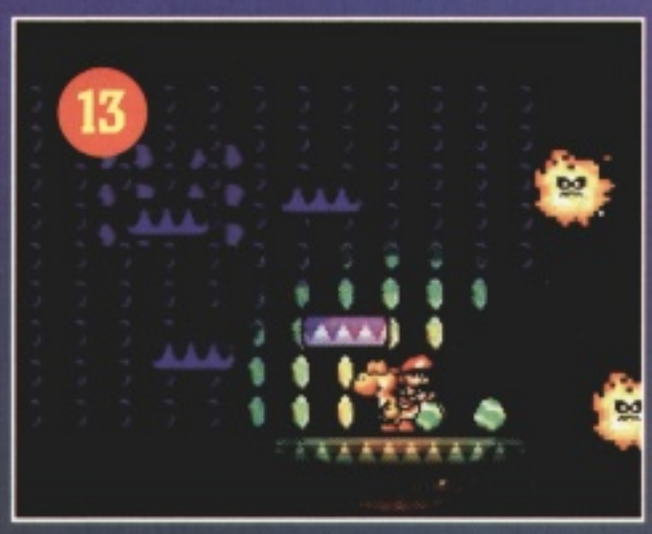
A 1-Up is concealed in the corner of the sand which holds the fourth Flower (11). A little further on you'll see a wooden post: pound it for the Red Switch. The entrance to the secret area is between the next two posts (12). Reach the last Flower by rolling in a Chomp Rock to use as a platform.



1-4 You can avoid danger and collect coins by running above much of this level. Look for cracked ceiling blocks that can be removed with an egg shot (14).

The green pipe between the seesaw and the locked door leads to a Coin Room (13). Unless you have a Blue Watermelon, you'll just have to dodge those fiery creatures.

When the boss attacks, avoid his stomp by crouching in the gaps in the floor on either side of the room. When he edges away, shoot him with eggs until he dies of embarrassment. Replenish your missile stock from the plant under the centre of the room (15).

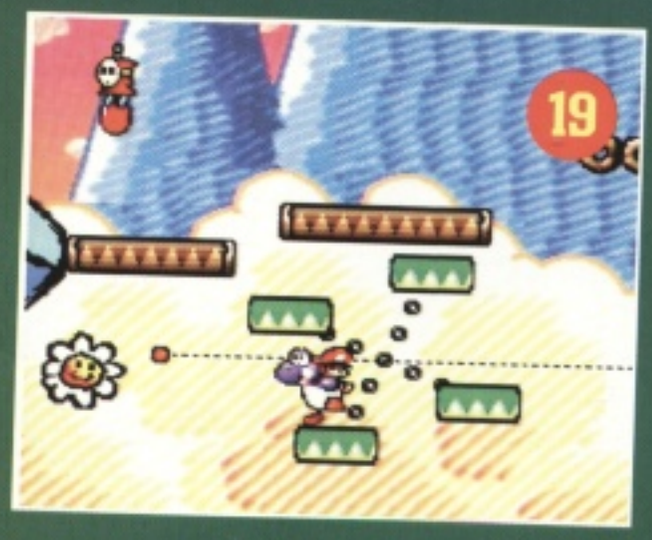


An eggy warning will cause these fellows to retreat beneath the waves for a short spell.

1-5 Because it's an auto-scrolling level, it helps to start with plenty of eggs (got an Anytime Egg in your inventory?). You can shoot many treasures without risking your neck (19). There are no secret areas here.

The Middle Ring is situated in the top left corner of the level. Jump into it before the auto-scroll changes direction (17).

Some of the coins sit beneath donut blocks (18): you'll need to stand on them until they drop, then jump off at the last second, to collect them.



1-6

There's a 1-Up near the start of the level (20). Using the Bounce Arrow, jump into the top right corner to find a Winged Cloud. Don't miss the flashing egg behind that door either.

A couple of Red Coins sit in the soft rock (22). Once Yoshi morphs into the Mole, dig up and work right to collect them. If you reach the Yoshi Block on the far side with plenty of eggs you can collect the coins anyway, but you don't get a second chance at this.To get the last Flower you need to jump from the rising platform to reach this area (23) and bounce a shot off the wall. Before you jump through the Goal Ring, rush underneath and grab the 1-Up before it explodes.

1-7

The Stripey-Trousered fellows are your tools for this level. When curled up in a ball they will obliterate otherwise indestructable enemies. Yoshi can also spit them out as re-usable missiles. To reach the first Flower in the level, simply push a Stripey up the log and roll it down the gap to hit the flower.

When you destroy the first Piranha Plant, check its resting place for a hidden ?-cloud (24).

There are two flashing eggs in the sand above the Bonus Room door (28). Make sure you shoot these eggs at an enemy to release the Red Coins they contain.

On the last stretch of this level you can reach the coins in the water by pounding through the sagging bridges (25). However, you should still be short of four Red Coins. Jump up from the topmost part of the leaning tree trunk (26) to dislodge a hidden Bounce Arrow. One bounce on this and you'll be propelled to a whole new section. Roll the Chomp Rock out from the left to uncover a ?-cloud, containing a sunflower ladder (27). Coin Heaven awaits above.

1-8

This level introduces that baby-snatching little sneak in the mask. Pound him into the ground or hit him with three normal headstomps to eliminate him.

To collect all the Flowers and Red Coins you'll need to use the platform on the sewer slime's head (29).

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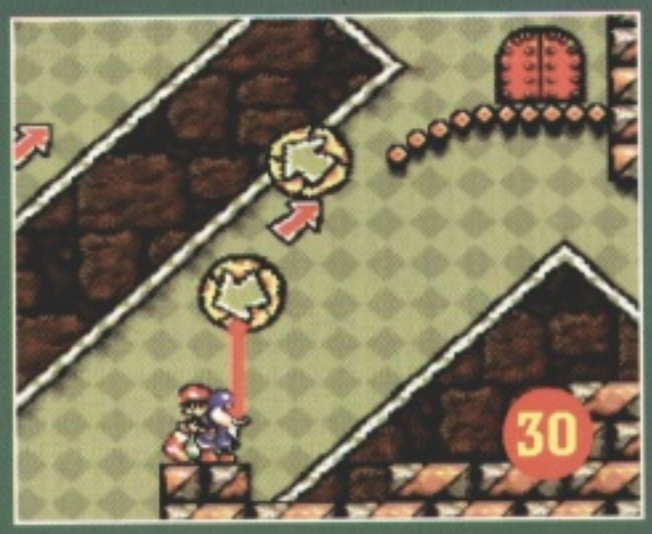
Yoshi can actually swallow the Rotating Arrow Platform (30) and put it where he wants it. He's that kind of chap. There's a (fairly irrelevant) red switch hidden above the red door (31).

Beating the boss (32) is a simple case of whacking him with eggs. His only attacks are to crush you beneath him or push you into the lava, but you're safe to jump on him. In fact, the little yellow blobs are more likely to cause you grief. If you get hit, try bouncing an egg off the ceiling and floor to knock +1 Stars off them.



WORLD 2

2-1

Shades of Mario World! Jump down the first green pipe and Baby Mazza can collect the first Flower and a key (34). After you've grabbed the second Flower, let the tall slab below it fall and luzz a Koopa shell down the gap to hit the 1-Up cloud (33). Collect the two coins below the next rock and jump off the Koopa's back for extra height.

Down the next pipe your dog-like chum will help you reach the bonus room key. Give him an egg to play with as a reward. He loves the egg.

When all the slabs have settled after the Middle Ring, you can find a ?-Cloud to the right (35). The happy flower is easily disarmed by pounding the ground. Ride the falling slabs down to catch the Flyguys with coins (39, 40). The next two flowers need a bit of speed to collect. The first one (36) disappears underneath falling slabs unless you grab it first. Then you need to jump up onto the slabs and fly left from them to reach the other (37). There's a ?-Cloud here too.

2-2

Super Mario World had quarterbacks. *Yoshi's Island* has baseball players. Catch their eggs with a tongue or you'll be knocked about.

You need Baby Mario to get over the spikes. The Arrow Cloud (42) will help you free the Super Star (43).

To collect the Red Coin here (44) you need to ricochet an egg to the fielder below and then move down (45) so that he pitches the egg at the ?-Cloud.

You only get one shot at the Mole Morph section and it contains valuable red coins so invest in a Magnifying Glass to spot the important ones.

2-3

The best technique for wading through the woodland ghosts of the first section is to eat anything that moves. A Red Switch in the highest sandblock reveals the coin stash (46).

To get the Bonus Room key you need to burrow through the sand with the Mole Morph. You can get more than one go at this if you leave this section temporarily (by going to the Red Switch area, for instance).

This large expanse of blue-grey sandblocks (49) contains no less than three Winged Clouds, and if you roll the Chomp Rock all the way down here (fast enough for it to pass over the green pipe) it uncovers a fourth cloud on the far left. Fire an egg diagonally up and left to cut a staircase to the higher items, then stomp down on the left to reach the coins. Hit this Red Switch to find the secret area with the remaining coins (48).

There's a Flower suspended high in the air to the left of the Bounce Arrow – if you're missing one, this is likely to be it.

Puzzled by those invisible blocks? What you need to do is return to the Mario-transforming Super Star under the one-way flippers. Wait around and it will follow you as far as the Chomp Rock. Timing is crucial, so let it come as close as it can (50) before grabbing it. You'll see more Stars to extend your Mario form when you race through the level, and if you make it all the way to the Goal Ring (47) you'll find an old-fashioned Super Mario Coin Block: bump it from underneath to clock up that cash. In fact, all of the spotted red blocks are Coin Blocks.

Incidentally, when you leave the Middle Ring of 2-3 and first encounter a flock of bats it's possible to jump onto the 'ceiling' of this level using the bats as stepping stones to boost your height. I've never discovered anything up here. Any ideas?

2-4

All the Boos in this section can be destroyed by an egg if you are facing away from them – in other words, you need to rebound your shot – and you can turn them into +1 stars by doing so (55, 56). One trick to avoiding them is to activate your egg toss, thus allowing you to walk and jump backwards still facing them.

To get the key you need to hit the first Red Switch and head into this room (54), bouncing your shot to hit the ?-Cloud.

In one room it appears a pair of flippers block your path to a door. Get into this section by destroying a cracked block in the the ceiling (52) and running back across the roof. The door leads to a dark room where you need to hit the balloon ghosts with three shots to turn them into Red Switches. There's a Flower in the top left (53).

Look for a 1-Up to the left when you exit the green pipe before the rotating fire bars.

The great Boo boss can't hurt you if you face him – you can even walk straight through him when he's transparent – but you can't touch him either unless you're facing away.

Your best bet is to stand on the steps and fire eggs straight forward. Then turn around, swallow passing bats for ammo, and repeat the process (51).

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2-5

You'll be pestered by Jugem on this level, but he has hidden uses. You can swallow his slow missiles for extra eggs, and if you get high enough to stomp him from above (perhaps by bouncing on the bubbles breathed by the lilacs) you can steal his cloud and fly around for a limited time (63). Use the cloud to discover the 1-Up cunningly hidden just AFTER the end of level, above and to the right of the Goal Ring (57).

To get the key to the Bonus Room (59) you should push the wooden box to the one solid platform in this section, or use the first Red Switch to make a temporary floor. You need this key to get one Flower. There's a 1-Up hidden by the Bonus Room door: roll the Chomp Rock back to this point to uncover it (60).

Just after the Middle Ring you'll see a small sandblock in the air above. It contains a sunflower seed (62). The empty room above the egg-dispensing plant contains a second Red Switch, but don't stomp the entrance post too far into the ground: you'll need to jump from it to reach the secret area. There's a hidden cloud to the left of this entrance.

Further on you'll find three sand rectangles in the air above a green pipe. Shoot the middle one to uncover a third Red Switch and yet another Coin Heaven (61).

Unless you're fast enough to catch all seven airborne Flyguys with Red Coins – arriving in waves of 1, 2, 3, and 1 respectively – you may find yourself short of a perfect 20. Shoot them down on sight (58), or use an Anywhere POW if you've got one. You'll find the other Coins and Winged Clouds by pounding all the posts on this level.

2-6

If you keep the D-Pad held down while pounding the ground, you'll sink through sand blocks without stopping. But er, don't do that here. Moderate your pounding by letting off the D-pad as soon as you've initiated the move. There are ten Red Coins, a Flower and a key to grab before you leave. Once in the cavern, you should look upwards to search for two grey sand platforms. Shoot the first one to dislodge a Bounce Arrow (65). The second one bridges a gap to three Red Coins (66), and contains a door to a treasure room – eat all the lantern men inside for your prize. Don't leave the cavern until you've got 20 Coins and 4 Flowers.

In the fourth and final section (67) you'll need to run across a line of 1-touch bomb platforms. If you can keep going (64) with enough momentum to stop the boulder and roll it back over the hill, you'll find a hidden 1-Up. Another 1-Up exists behind the face of the happy flower further on.

2-7

The Fatguys in this level can be turned into giant eggs if swallowed. They're also deceptively springy if you jump on their heads and keep B held down. With at least one normal egg, jump from the head of the first red Fat Guy to reach the ledge above, where one Flower is hidden. Then head left and you'll see a ?-Cloud above two posts. Stomp the posts for a Red Coin, run across the red bridge made by the ?-Cloud and fire off a giant egg to stop the three Flyguys with Red Coins (73).

The sneakiest section is in the top left of the level. Use the large Bounce Arrow (68) to jump high up to the right, where a cloud platform sits (69). Follow the cloud platforms left (you may have to jump off the screen, out of view) and you'll reach (70). The Winged Cloud reveals a Red Switch secret area. Once inside, you'll see four sand-filled pits. Blast all the way down the second pit from the left to reach another Flower (72).

If you jump from a green Bullet Bill to gain extra height, there's a 1-Up Cloud awaiting. Follow the flashing Flyguy.

By the time you reach the car morph bubble you should have all the Red Coins and Flowers. Did you stomp all the posts around the red Star Flower?

After you've been lifted up by the rotating platforms, look below the next sheer drop for a yellow lift (71). The underground passage contains a Bounce Arrow to propel you straight up to a helicopter morph bubble. This secret route will boost your lives considerably.

2-8

When you first come across a rotating Arrow Platform (78), use it to collect coins and look for a secret pipe (77)) in the top left corner of this section. If you're feeling lazy you can always use a few eggs and a Green Watermelon to remove all the blue spikes, and thus danger, from this bit.

Look for the first key down and left when you reach the dark pipe. The bomb-dropping ghosts can be disrupted by Yoshi pounding the ground. This is especially useful when you're crossing a chasm (80).

The final key is in the left hand side structure, in the jar at the very top (79). Once through the door there are two jars you can smash for goodies.

To beat this Boss you need to push his vase off the edge of the platform (74). He'll try to push you into the clouds he breathes, and that's the attack you should make efforts to dodge. The two minions will start to push back (75) but you can overcome them, and with patience a perfect score shouldn't be difficult.

WORLD 3

3-1

As long as you're thorough in grabbing coins and flattening posts into the ground you shouldn't have any problem finding 100%. The only secret bit of note is here (82): drop into the water with enough force to sink and push left. You'll slide underneath a series of ledges, the topmost one containing a Bounce Arrow. From here you can jump up to a special sub-game, where you try to shoot 1-Ups as you slip down a column of giant donut blocks (81).

3-2

Because of their shields, you can only hit or swallow the tribesmen from behind. Don't miss the two Flyguys with Red Coins on this level. Find a Red Switch in the gap after the green pipe for an alternative coin-packed route to the green pipe at the end of the second section, but you may want to collect the Flower a little further on before taking it.

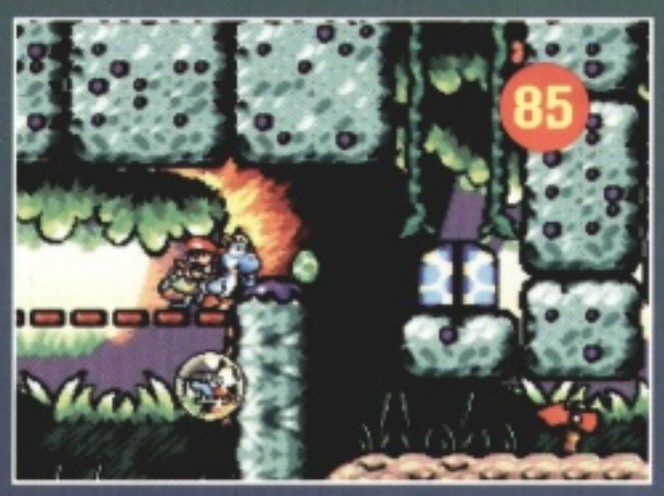
Still missing four Red Coins? You need to fly left from this ledge (83) or from the top of the ferris wheel platforms and push left to enter a secret area with the door to the Bonus Room. The coins are concealed behind the foliage.

3-3

You want plenty of ammunition on this level – to stall the blue guardian and to reach difficult Red Coins – so don't hurt this cheeky monkey (84): you can swallow his cactus bombs to make eggs.

If you're short of six eggs, you may find the lardy seagull being followed by its young. You can collect up to six of these small birds (86) and use them as 'boomerang' eggs. Hit the bridge-building ?-Cloud and take the blue door on the right (85) before you helicopter morph and head left.

You should have 10 Coins and 3 Flowers before the sub morph section (87). This is tightly timed but the only troublesome enemy is the bristly red fish. He will chase you down if you torpedo him.

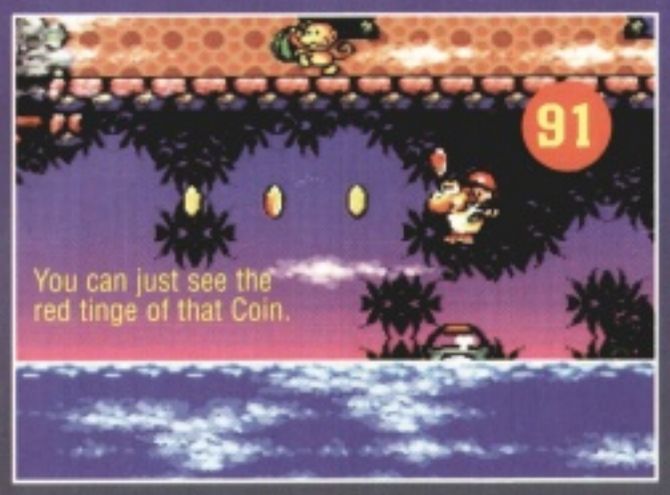


3-4

The first bonus section (90) is reached by destroying the blue spikes near the first monkey (a Yellow Submarine!).

You find more blue spikes in the section before that containing the red door. As you ferris wheel across, check below for a 1-Up cloud (88). Make sure you don't trigger the bridge before you've extracted the first Flower in this area.

Since the acid drops fall at the sides, the best way to beat the Boss without taking a hit is to stand right underneath his tonsils (89), pushing up and pressing Y to eat the giant Shyguys as they fall from above (only two eggs/Shyguys at any time). Then fire them straight back by pushing up again. Ten hits will give him indigestion.



3-5 A Winged Cloud exists in the gap just after the first green pipe.

Once you've made your way across the treetops of the third section, work back again on the lower trees (you should finish collecting Red Coins here). Underneath the original entrance point is a passage to a Red Switch secret area. Hit the hidden ?-Cloud revealed by the arrow and shoot as many treasures as you can (93).

3-6 There are two ways to leave the first section. If you jump right and glide from the highest tree on the left you can enter the cavern by a higher entrance that gives you Four Red Coins and a Flower. The key is just below you.

I'm saying nothing about the Blue Hedgehogs. I thought Shigs was above that kind of thing.

The last Flower is in the Coin Heaven below the green pipe, lower right corner of the cavern section. Use the Red Switch to reach it (94). If you haven't found all the items for a perfect score, search again.

Finally, before you leave the level – hear that puffing noise near the Goal? Look up and you'll see a ?-Cloud. Shoot it, then look for the Red Switch hidden above the door into this section.

3-7 Look for a Red Switch in the gap above a monkey who's trapped in a rock cage. It takes you to a Sub Morph.

There are two sunflower ladders in the next section. Jump up and right from the second one to find a secret area with Coins and a Flower (98).

You can use the Bounce Arrow to go clear over the sheer wall and find a 1-Up (96). Stomp the posts down to get back.

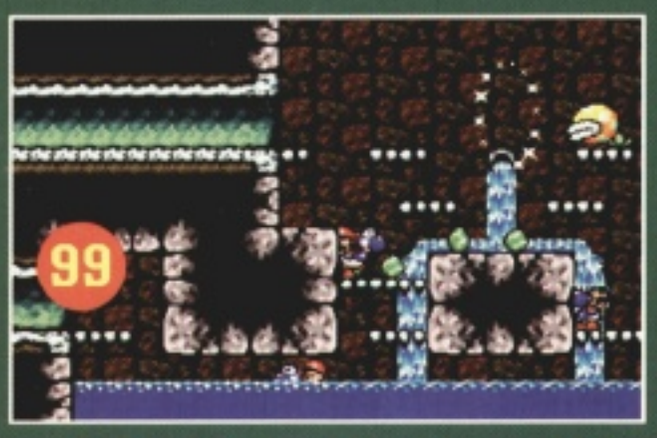
In the final section you need to go under the water from the left to reach a Flower (97). The Bonus Room is also here, with the key right beside it. Stun the big ugly catfish with an egg beforehand. Oh, and don't waste your time pounding wooden posts. On this level they deliberately contain nothing.

3-8 To beat the Sewer Slimes (101) you should swallow all of the minions they spit forth and then hit them with six uninterrupted hits. They're a vital eggs source in later sections. Because of the lack of Stars on 3-8 I recommend you stock up 30 with the Message Block. If you fire an egg at the ceiling above it and strike it via a ricochet off the wall behind, you'll draw two +1 Stars from it every time. A local Egg Dispenser lets you do so at leisure. Sneaky.

If you're short of a perfect score then you've missed this passage (99) under the water. I recommend avoiding the Middle Ring until you've collected all of the Red Coins and Flowers. There isn't another one before the boss, and he may take you a couple of attempts to finish off perfectly.

The plant Boss has an obvious 'heart', patched with a plaster, and your technique should be to jump over its sliding attacks before hitting the heart with the sort of ricochet shot you learnt earlier (100). The falling seeds need to turn into Snappers before they can be converted to eggs.

However, there's a really cheap way to finish the boss without risking that perfect rating. Approach his room slowly and just get the shrunken Piranha Plant into view. Staying far away – your head should be under the sewer outlet – jump out of the water and immediately shoot it with an egg. Kamek will fly in and shout something like "Oh, my!" (it's in Japanese on my cart).



SNES TECH & GAMING ANSWERS

GAMEFREAK

By Tony Mott

You have a gaming-related query. You need some help. Do you get in touch with 'videogame legend' Dominik Diamond? Or perhaps Violet Berlin? Or perhaps the fat one off of *T.I.G.S.*? No, no and no. There's only one place to come for help and it is the fount of knowledge they call Gamefreak.

From Juo Higuel, Portugal:

Q Is the technology used in the Ultra 64 better than that of the M2?

A In some respects, yes. Overall, though, the M2 should be able to produce higher-quality moving images than Nintendo's machine. It's software that matters, of course, and the M2 won't have a *Mario*, a *Zelda*, a *Kirby*, a *Starfox*...

Q How will NU64 carts compare with the CD used on the PlayStation?

A Not sure what you're driving at exactly here, so let's go right from the top. First, memory retrieval from carts is in practice almost instantaneous, whereas CD retrieval (the optical system versus the former's electrical basis) is currently only up to around 1200 kilobytes per second, commercially. CDs have become popular because they're cheap (about 50p each), they can hold loads of data (Atari's Jaguar CD format carries a whopping 720 megabytes, though 660 is standard) and they're relatively robust (as that bloke with the fetchingly parting hairdo off *Tomorrow's World* attempted to prove when Philips invented the CD, by spreading marmalade onto one, casually wiping it with a cloth then bunging it in the CD player's tray – it still worked, fortunately for him). Carts fall down because their component parts are so expensive – memory chippage costs dosh. And I must mention the other advantage of cartridges; the one to Nintendo, and that's the fact that the big N has complete control over their manufacture, and can dictate exactly how much they want to charge when selling them to companies who wish to release games on the system. Hereth end the lesson.

Q Will normal TVs handle the 100Hz plus of the Ultra 64?

A Uh, yes.

Q Can you offer me a copy of *Illusion Of Time* for my SNES?

A Yeah, of course I can, mate – I'll offer you my own personal copy for £100.

From Jack Perrett, Truro, Cornwall:

Q Will UK Ultra 64s have that stinky Ultra 64 logo or the cool 3D 'N'?

A The stinky Ultra 64 logo I'm afraid.

Q How easy would it be to run an imported machine, and where can I get hold of one?

A You'll have already seen optimistic mail order companies offering Ultra 64s ('In stock now – call!'), but there won't be any in this country in any great number until May. By then you'll find all the usual mail-order gaming emporiums selling them (at around £350-500 a throw, I suspect), so keep an eye on the ads in *Super Play*. As far as getting them to run over here there should be little problem as long as you have a telly that's compatible with the original Japanese Super Famicom.

Q Would it be worth the extra costs to get a Japanese machine, in your opinion?

A If you can't wait for a UK model (which I'll bet my fave pair of 501s won't appear until at *least* four or five months after the Japanese version) it's probably best to go for a US machine, which looks like being the first version released outside of Japan. It'll be cheaper than a Japanese import plus its games will obviously run with English text. If you're serious about gaming, of course, it goes without saying that you need a machine capable of running software full-screen at full-speed.

One is 'stinky', one isn't. We get the 'stinky' one.

From James Richins, Uxbridge, Middlesex:

Q I own a UK SNES and PAL TV. I connect them the normal way and also connect a stereo to the SNES using A/V leads through the SCART socket.

This set-up has worked well for over a year, but now I can only get sound on the TV – no picture. I've tried retuning the TV, taking the SCART leads and stereo out and using other TVs.

I do know, however, that it's possible to get a picture on a SCART TV using my SNES, (but cannot use that TV), so I know the SNES isn't broken. I've also tried it with a friend's PAL leads and that doesn't work.

Is there a way of fixing the problems so I can connect my SNES to my PAL TV and get a picture?

A There's a problem with your RF connection – you've just got to find out whether the problem lies at the SNES's end or the TV's end. Use your RF cable on the other TV; if it works you'll know that your usual telly has a knackered aerial socket (in which case any Mr TV Fix-It can sort it out), if it doesn't work you'll know that it's the RF connection on your SNES that's had it. In which case you'd better get on the horn to THE Games on 01703 653377 and ask for the Service Centre – they'll put things straight (you'll have to pay, of course, 'cos your machine's warranty's expired).

From Noel Williamson, Donaghmede, Dublin:

Q Considering the much-vaunted compression ratio available on NU64 carts, would it be possible to put *Super Mario RPG*, *Secret Of Mana 2*, *Final Fantasy Extreme* (no. 5), *Front Mission* and *Romancing Sa•Ga 3* – a rough total of 144 megabits without compression – onto one SNES cartridge?

A I wish Nintendo had never made those Ultra 64 cart size claims because it's confused things terribly. I get letters all the time which talk about compressed, decompressed and 'uncompressed' memory and it drives me bonkers. It's all irrelevant, really. SNES games use compressed data too – you may already have a cart in your collection which, although only 16 megabits big in chip terms, uses compressed data to push the decompressed figure out to significantly more than that (in *Batman Forever*, for example, there's a noticeable pause between stages as the SNES 'decrunches' the level code) – but you don't hear publishers banging on about them having more memory than is truly the case. Nintendo said what they did to make their proposed eight-megabyte Ultra 64 carts look nice and bulky when compared to the 650 megabyte capacity available on PlayStation and Saturn CDs. The Ultra 64 has much faster data handling than the SNES, and that's another reason why your suggestion isn't possible.

From Scott James, Mid Glamorgan, S. Wales:

Q I recently went to my local games retailer in Swansea and they told me they'll be ordering copies of an American version of *Secret Of Mana 2* in either February or March – was your investigation carried out incorrectly or are they lying?

A Square Soft USA maintain that a Western release is not going to happen so it's a fib.

Q Will coverage of the SNES and its market die out once you begin reviewing games for the Ultra 64? (This happened in *TOTAL!* – SNES in, NES out.)

A I'd prefer the term 'naturally reduce' than 'die out'. It won't be like the NES and SNES situation, though – the SNES still has a lot left to be squeezed out of it.

Q Are Square Soft making any plans to release a fourth (or seventh in Japan) *Final Fantasy* game on the SNES?

A I heard on the grapevine just the other day that there's another SNES *FF* game on the way, but not for perhaps another 12 months. It would make sense for Square to make some more money out of their most lucrative games series ever, wouldn't it?

Q Are there going to be Western translations of *Bahamut Lagoon*, *Front Mission* and *Romancing Sa•Ga 3*?

A No, no and no. I understand that the only Square Soft US releases currently on schedule are *Super Mario RPG*.

Q Is it possible for me to get my hands on the tips booklets frequently advertised in the instruction manuals of games such as *FFIII* and *Chrono Trigger*?

A You're a real RPG-head, aren't you? I'm not aware of anyone bringing them into this country and in the States they're only available directly from Square. If anyone knows otherwise, write in and tell me.

From Andrew Crane, Bournemouth, Dorset:

Q What was that Konix console thing? I found a 1989 issue of *ACE* magazine recently and it mentioned it a few times.

A This is a Nintendo mag, but I'll indulge you 'cos I'm ace like that (sorry). It was a British-produced 16-bit console that was never released, for various reasons, one of the most notable being that it used 3.5" floppy disks for its software while its potential Japanese rivals used cartridges. It was going to have various control options (steering wheel, handlebars, etc.) and there was even a hydraulic chair planned (the prototype of which reputedly suffered from weak motors meaning it had rather a lot of trouble shifting around a 15-stone gamer). Several games were developed for the thing, including Vivid Image's sci-fi platformer *Hammerhead*, but it's best just forgotten about, and serves chiefly as a reminder that videogame consoles are designed and made in Japan, not Britain (see also Amstrad's GX4000 and the Amiga CD32).

Q What do you think are the five best *Mario* games?

A *Super Mario World*, *Yoshi's Island*, *Super Mario Brothers 3*, *Super Mario Bros.* and *Super Mario Bros. 2*. *Super Mario 64* may well oust *SMB2* when it arrives.

Q Bearing in mind that the Ultra 64's joypad is available in various colours, is there any chance of Nintendo also offering it with the machine itself? I'd rather choose my own colour than be stuck with a Mega Drive-resembling Ultra 64.

A Nice idea, but no chance of it happening.

Q Have you any experience of producing games?

A Your habit of asking odd quezzies shows no sign of letting up, does it? Okay, I did the graphics on a couple of Speccy games back in the '80s, and I've got umpteen unfinished 8- and 16-bit games of my own design lying around in some dusty corner somewhere. These days I just don't get the time to sit down and get involved in anything like that – much to my chagrin.

Q What happens to the used Envelope Art entries?

A Funny you should mention that – only yesterday I tripped over a two-foot-high pile of the things. Wil hasn't thrown any away for ages because "he'd feel bad about chucking them out". Honestly, these arty types get on my wick.

How Not To Invent A Console: Don't put a steering wheel on it and make sure your games are better than this (*Hammerhead*).

From Dean Manning, Auckland, New Zealand:

Q I have just bought a Sony Trinitron 29" TV which has A/V inputs/outputs and an S-Video connection. How does S-Video rate with SCART and A/V connections? I'm planning to buy the US Ultra 64 when it comes out in April and I want the best possible picture.

A The order of picture quality, from best to worst, goes like this: SCART, S-Video, A/V (through phono sockets – composite video and stereo L and R) and finally RF (i.e. the aerial socket). In other words, forget about S-Video – *Edge* magazine erroneously claimed it to be the best display method a while back and that probably accounts for the confusion which many gamers have experienced.

From Richard Melville, Exeter, Devon:

Q What has happened to Rare? *DKC* and *KI* are both very average and not really original. Have they succumber to mass-market theorism, chucking originality out of the window in return for vast profits or are they under a stranglehold by the big N?

A 'Mass-market theorism'? Steady on. I see it this way: Ninty want big commercial hits and that's what Rare have proved able of giving. I agree that in terms of gameplay and overall design Rare are still a fair way behind the best Japanese codeshops, but they're about as close as we have in the UK right now. The Ultra 64's power should hopefully release more of their potential, design-wise...

Q Is the memory expansion slot on top of the Ultra 64 for the bulky drive or for RAM, to act as a buffer between the Ultra 64 and the bulky drive?

A As I write, the Ultra 64's 'memory expansion' port remains something of a mystery. It certainly isn't for the Bulky Drive – which will connect to the machine's underside, giving a two-tier Mega CD-type arrangement – and Nintendo have yet to even make offiical mention of its existence. Make of that what you will.

Q Is the bulky drive another of Nintendo's vapourware products like the 'PlayStation add-on'? I think Nintendo intend to stay with carts and are just mentioning the bulky drive to make punters think the Ultra 64 will not be without an optical drive, thus putting it up there with the PlayStation. What's the story?

A There's a small chance that the unit won't appear inasmuch as there's a small chance I'll get hit by a bus tomorrow, but everything looks on course at this stage for a November unveiling. Bear in mind that the proposed Sony/Nintendo co-produced 'PlayStation' unit was a lower-profile piece of kit than the bulky drive, and was never confirmed in the same official fashion.

Q Capcom have announced they will make an exclusive 3D *Street Fighter* game for the

DAYDREAMING

Our first daydream of the month of March comes from the biscuitty-sounding Gary Baldi of Barnsley:

'I'd like to see an Ultra 64 game based on *Jurassic Park* where, very simply, you'd build your own park, with munching dinos and all. It'd involve building cages, pens, fences, recreational facilities, car rails, power cables, etc. You'd then deal with stuff like safety, staff, security, dinosaur diets and maybe even their DNA structure. The main aim of the game would be to get as many people to your park as possible and then make sure they stay happy (and don't get eaten or anything). There could be scenarios like the T-Rex escaping or Raptors invading the visitor's centre. To examine your park you could walk around it yourself asking others what they think; look at it from the point-of-view of any visitor; look at it from a dinosaur's perspective; take a chopper ride; or use a fully rotatable scale model, *Sim City*-style, the most commonly-used method. Well?'

This is great – a bit of *Theme Park*-ery combined with some action stuff. Maybe Ocean still have the rights to *Jurassic Park* – how about it, Ocean? This wins a prize, incidentally. Some carts are in the post.

This one's from Keith Chung of Gwent, South Wales:

'My daydream is a bit different. I want to see a real-life version of Kaneda's motorcycle from *Akira*. It would do at least 170mph and 0-60 in under 3 seconds, with six forward gears and one reverse, an on-board computer which would control the anti-lock brakes, suspension and go-faster accessories, as well as the standard stuff. It would switch between one- and two-wheel drive, and have leather seats, alloy wheels, a mini-disc music system and both cruise- and traction-control.'

I've always wondered about it being ceramic, though. Wouldn't it, like, smash like a tea pot if you knocked it on a curb or something? How embarrassing that'd be.

If you've got any illustrations or design work in mind to accompany your daydreams in the future, send them in and I'll print anything that really impresses me. Oh, and send you some top SNES software, of course. It'll have to be good, though...

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Ultra 64 – does 'exclusive' really mean that it will be solely for the Ultra 64, not just a special edition to satisfy Nintendo's release criteria?
A The latest is that it's going to be a completely new game which will be released in coin-op form before the summer (using modified Ultra 64 hardware) and in the home by the end of the year. Other formats can only get the game after 12 months in accordance with Nintendo's Ultra 64 publishing deal.

From David Dean, Nonamesville:
Q I am thinking of buying a Game Boy but whenever I go to buy it I always think that Nintendo will make something better in portable consoles. Am I right?
A Cripes, do you have loads of trouble deciding what to wear in the mornings as well? There's very little chance of Nintendo releasing another handheld console in the next few years, so you might as well go and buy a Game Boy.
Q What is the EXT socket on the underside of the SNES for?
A Its labelling refers to plugging EXTernal devices into it, namely things like the Satellaview and the cancelled CD-ROM drive (see the Melvillester's letter).
Q Will the Ultra 64 be supplied with one, two, three or four pads?
A Just the one, as that pathetic group of pretend crusties The Levellers might say.
Q Why can't a game ever score 100%?
A There's a very convenient example I can use to illustrate exactly why. Recently a US mag previewed *DKQ* along with words to the effect of "God knows what we're going to do when we review it – we gave the original 100% and this looks loads better." To assess something as absolutely perfect is rather foolish, do you not think?

From Luke Nardoni, Eldene, Swindon:
Q Is there ever going to be a 3D beat-'em-up for the SNES, or have I got more chance of finding a 'U' certificate Manga release?
A I seriously doubt it'll happen, but Argonaut may be secretly resurrecting *FX Fighter* as I write. It's your only hope.
Q Is *Street Fighter Alpha* going to be released on the SNES or NU64?
A No. Their SNES titles for '96 are mostly platformers and because the game is appearing on the Saturn and PlayStation there's no chance of it coming out on the Ultra 64 because of the big N's licensing agreements.
Q Is *DKQ* worth buying if you've already got *DKC*?
A So long as you a) loved the original, and b) already have *Yoshi's Island*, yes.
Q Why have Nintendo stayed with traditional cartridges instead of moving onto CD like the other next generation systems?
A Er, we discussed this in our Ultra 64 feature last month, didn't we? The bottom line is that Nintendo know how to make more money than their competitors, simple as that.

From Andrew Martin, Woking:
Q I like Super FX games and have *Starwing* and *Stunt Race FX*. Could you please tell me what SFX games are coming out in the near future.
A The only one I know of is *Starwing 2*, which Argonaut and Ninty are reputedly putting the finishing touches to right now. Nintendo have yet to confirm any others, although Shigeru Miyamoto is working on at least two more SNES games and it's possible that one of them will reprise the ground-breaking Super FX techniques demonstrated in *Yoshi's Island*.

ANY QUESTIONS?

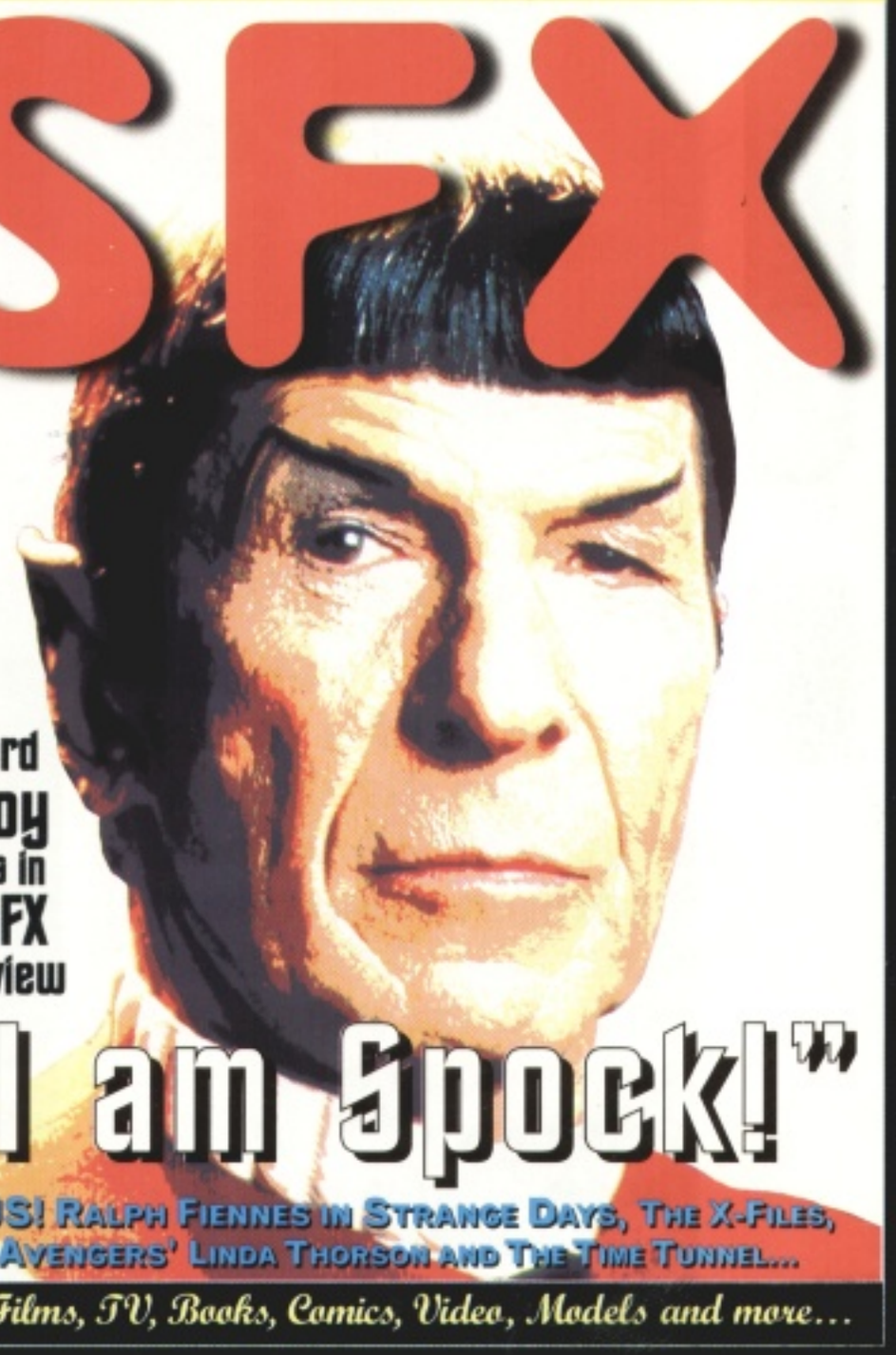
Then you need an expert. And the most expert of experts can be contacted via:

Gamefreak, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

Kaneda's ceramic bike! Gimme, gimme, gimme. I must have one now!

ON SALE NOW! ON SALE NOW! ON SALE NOW! ON SALE NOW!

SFX



Leonard Nimoy speaks in The SFX Interview

"I am Spock!"

PLUS! RALPH FIENNES IN STRANGE DAYS, THE X-FILES, THE AVENGERS' LINDA THORSON AND THE TIME TUNNEL...

Future Films, TV, Books, Comics, Video, Models and more...

What's So Funny?

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Future

Preview the mag on:
http://www.futurenet.co.uk/entertainment/comedyreview.html

FINAL FANTASY FORUM

Remember the tightwad who offered you a ferry fare if you danced like a chicken? (I don't believe we print this stuff – Ed)

This wouldn't be much of a forum if we didn't listen to your views so next month, in response to hundreds of demands, we'll be revealing the tremendous end sequence of *FFIII*. Those of you with a British SNES have been unable to see it because of hardware incompatibility, and we know how much pain this has caused. In the meantime, enjoy these roleplaying titbits...

He seems to have read the Bill Cosby guide to good fathering in your absence.

Perhaps, but her cooking turns your hair green.

Chrono Trigger

Although it's actually fairly straightforward, one part of *Chrono Trigger* that has, judging by the contents of the *Super Play* mailbag, confused many players is the transformation of Moon Stone to Sun Stone. For a start, the boss who guards the Stone is one of the toughest (so take a look at the section on defeating him if you haven't already).

Jerky is sun-dried meat, in case you are European and curious.

Naturally, you take the Moon Stone to 65,000,000 BC and place it in the Sun Keep, then zip forward to 2300 AD to remove it. But no! It's gone! Head back to 600AD and you'll see that it's still there – with a Power Tab for company – but by 1000 AD it's vanished. Somebody in this time zone has stolen it, but who? A quick airborne search in the Epoch reveals magical sparks over the Mayor's Manor, but he denies any knowledge of a Moon Stone when questioned.

So your next move is to visit the Snail Stop cafe, buy a rather expensive Jerky from that establishment's proprietor and zip back some 400 years to the Elder's House. Inside you'll come across a woman who

A small act in the past makes a big difference in the future.

needs your meat, so to speak. She will offer you something in exchange – and hey, it did cost you 9900 G – but if you give it to her freely she will promise to teach her children the virtue of being generous. Here's the twist: this meat-demanding woman is actually an ancestor of the Mayor in Chrono's time, and if you return to 1000

Aw, what the hell? You're rich enough to buy a town anyway.

PROFILES

RELM

Opinions are split on the precocious Thamasan painter: despite her interesting skills, Relm is possibly the most disgustingly cute little brat ever to grace an RPG (with an easy listening theme tune to match). Without Esper enhancement she remains one of the weaker characters, although there's a subversive pleasure in letting a ten-year-old child lead a party of battle-hardened mage warriors.

As you now know, Relm's father, Shadow, has a number of revealing dream sequences if you save him from the Floating Continent. But if he is left to die in the first half of the game then you may be able to see Relm's dream instead.

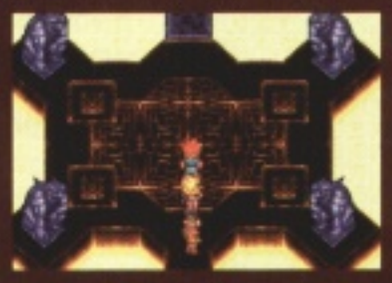
Relm's big scene with Ulty – er, I mean Ultros – troubles the weak-stomached Locke...

AD you'll discover that your actions in the past have altered the present. Your inspirational values were passed down from generation to generation and you'll find that the Mayor, having benefited from a more enlightened upbringing, is now quite willing to return your Moon Stone.

Return the Stone to the Sun Keep and let it mature for, ooh, 1300 years. Place Lucca in your party before collecting the fully-charged Sun Stone and you'll automatically head back to her house, where she makes a Wondershot gun with its power while her old man Taban knocks together some Sun Shades.

Years of exposure to the Sun's rays will power up this moon stone into a fully charged sun stone.

Son of Sun



Sadly, Son of Sun was not at home when we called round.

So our photographers were forced to linger outside.

You could make a fortune running holidays to the past.

Although he seems invulnerable, the Son of Sun has an Achilles heel. One of the flames in orbit around his core will hurt him when struck, rather than retaliating against the attacker.

Your best strategy is to physically strike each flame in turn with a simple weapon attack, healing major damage, to discover the weak spot. If it hurts you, try another. Once you've found the rogue flame, quickly direct the other characters' attacks towards that flame. Though he spins his wheel of protective fire to confuse you, keep looking for the weak point and using your magic points to heal damage.

Since the Son of Sun uses Fire magic you should equip the Ruby Armour, Ruby Vest, Taban Vest/Suit, Red Vest or (preferably) Red Mail to reduce damage. It's worth stealing from him too: you can Charm the Black Mail from Son of Sun's core and Elixirs from each of his flames.

Frightful Energy!

This column thrives on your mana. If you're stuck on a Square game or you just want to share your pearls of wisdom, let us be your Noiseblaster to the roleplaying world. Just squeeze some ink from the purple cheeks of Ultros and write to:

Final Fantasy Forum, *Super Play*
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, Avon. BA1 2BW

Better Off As... ?

The big *FFIII* question: should you take Ragnarok as an Esper or as a Sword from the old weapon dealer in Narshe? In case you were unaware, the Esper form teaches Ultima and transforms monsters into tasty treasures, some of which can be wagered at the Coliseum for even better goods (the Genji Glove and Moogle Suit, for instance). In most battles you'll simply end up with Dried Meat, however, so we've listed the more desirable targets in – yes! – our *Super Play Super Transforming Monster Table.*

Monster	Transformation
Barb-E	Ribbon
Borras	Ogre Nix
Boxed Set	Safety Bit
Covert	Trump/Shuriken
Dante	Thunder Shield
Dark Force	Elixir
Didalos	Cursed Ring
Doom Drgn	Elixir
Enuo	Elixir
GtBehemoth	Elixir
Harpiai	Exp Egg
Harpy	Exp. Egg
Lethal Wpn	Gold Armour
Madam	Ribbon
Outsider	Assassin
Phase	Elixir
Pug	Imp Halberd
Retainer	Genji Glove
Samurai	Genji Glove
Scullion	Gold Helmet
Soul Dancer	Marvel Shoes
Spektor	Tintinabar
Steroidite	Ogre Nix
Tap Dancer	Marvel Shoes
Test Rider	Ice Shield
Trixter	Safety Bit
Vectagoyle	Thunder Shield
Veteran	Relic/Cursed Ring or Thornlet
Wild Cat	Tintinabar

Ragnarok doesn't have a high probability of success, unfortunately, so you may be forced to use it many times before the desired item is created. Good luck.

Randomly initiated in much the same fashion – by resting at the inn of a place like Thamasa – a young Relm asks her "gramps", Strago, where her father might be. This won't work if you wait around long enough to save 'Clyde', remember.

Relm's best gear is the Magus Rod, Genji Shield, Cat Hood and Behemoth Suit (slay a Behemoth to get one). A second Memento Ring relic – which only she and Shadow can equip – can be found in Strago's house, upstairs, on the left wall.

Sadly, the most remarkable fact about Relm is that her Sketch skill is slightly bugged and has been known to crash the game in spectacular fashion. One possible by-product of the glitch is that you can sometimes find your party in possession of 99 Ragnarok swords, new costume colours (we've seen Shadow dressed all in white!) or with bizarre magic spells like Siegfried's Hyper Drive.

There is no hard and fast rule for working this glitch to your advantage, and you do risk the complete obliteration of your saved file, but if it sounds appealing you might try this. Once she has joined your party, take Relm to the Triangle Island towards the north-east of the map and attempt to sketch an Intangir (or some other monster on which you have cast Vanish). Alternatively, let Gau leap a monster on the Veldt and sketch him when he tries to rejoin your party. If the game crashes, reset and check the inventory of your saved game. For some reason the bug seems ineffective after Relm reaches level 50, and if you want to avoid trouble before that point then what you must do is discover the Fake Mustache relic in Gogo's subterranean lair (Triangle Island, World of Ruin). The Mustache transforms Sketch into Control, a superior skill which turns the devastating special attacks of enemy monsters to your advantage.

There's no definite method of glitching, but this is a good way to start.

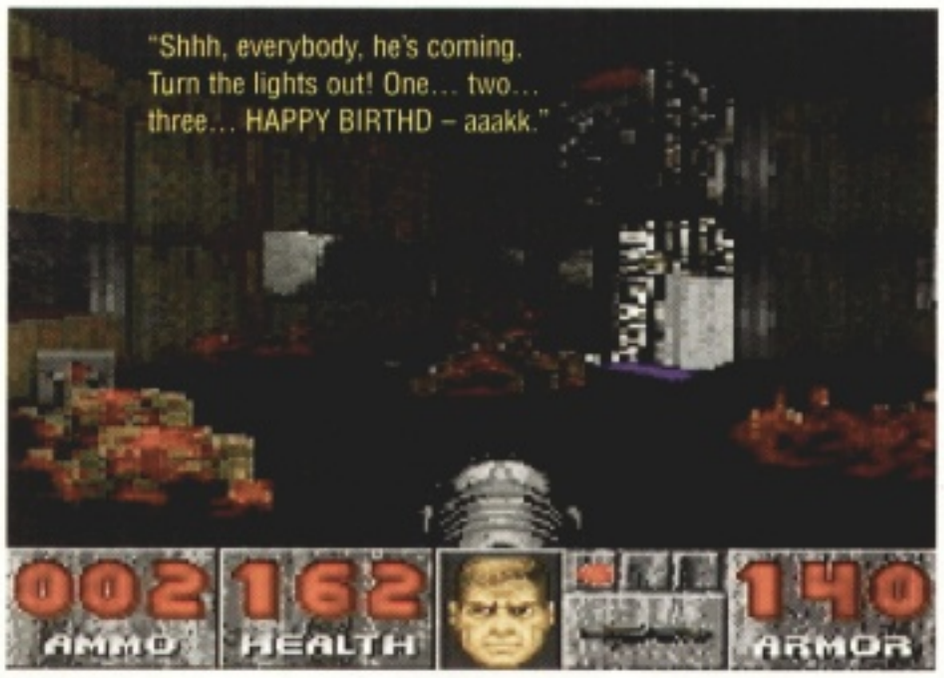
"Nosing about in your mother's cupboard again, eh? Hmmmf?"

Many monsters happily suffer their own attacks – wait, hit X and use just Relm.

MODE 7

By ZY NICHOLSON

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME-FREAKS!



A rocket launcher. On the second level. In the hands of a lunatic.

This is the first Chainsaw you can acquire in *Doom*. It's in a secret area of level 2, Nuclear Plant. Check our player's guide in *SP*37 if you haven't found it.

DOOM

(Ocean/Williams/ Sculptured)
***SP*36: 92%**

● Weapon upgrades

CHA-CHAK BOOOM! Our first revelation of the month carries the unmistakable taste of Patrick Salt of Lymington, who has inadvertently discovered the only *Doom* cheat to date. Here goes...

First of all, you'll need to acquire a chainsaw within the game. Search in one of the following levels:

Nuclear Plant
Toxin Refinery
Military Base
Fortress of Mystery
Halls of the Damned
Mount Erebus
Warrens

Now fire off all of the rounds in your current weapons so that you have no ammo. Select your standard issue automatic pistol and it will show 000 bullets. Fire it once and it should wondrously upgrade to the next weapon you're missing, i.e. pistol upgrades to shotgun, shotgun to chain gun, chain gun to

It's always been my intention, whether writing or subbing this column, to include only the freshest and mintiest cheats for your delectation. However, some newer readers have complained that I don't print tips for 'old' games. Do you want to see the classics covered again, or do your innards fandango at the prospect? Send your opinions (and cheats) to: Mode 7, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth St. Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

DON'T ASK ALLAN

INVALUABLE MONTHLY GAMING ADVICE

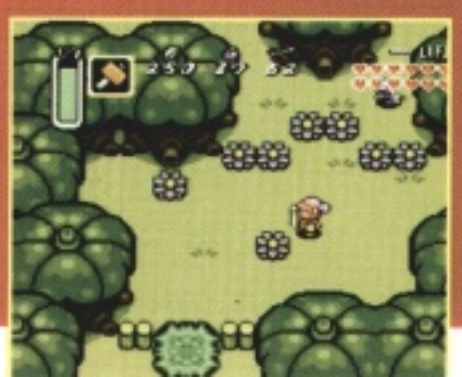
In this month's column I prove yet again that I really ought to get out more. Is it Christmas yet?

Dear Danny (*Sob. Whimper – Zy*)
Oh please, please could you send to me some cheats for *Vortex* because I am terribly stuck on the game!
Heyman Yau, South Wales

Zy Says:
I'm sorry but I really can't send out personally-tailored game advice. That's, em, sort of why we print a national magazine every month...

Link, the master of camouflage, lies cunningly in wait.

Besides, you'll be wanting the Argonaut Super Code. Enter CTGXF as a password and you'll be able to execute a range of cheats. Pressing up and down on the briefing screen lets you choose the starting level, and once in the game proper you can twiddle knobs on the controller in port two for the following effects: R – infinite lives, ammo, health, Y – initiate self-destruct sequence, A – skip to the end of the level. This code also allows you to rotate and examine the game's



Look out. It's a disturbing Dark World chicken.

DKC2: DIDDY'S KONG QUEST

(Nintendo/Rare)
***SP*40: 82%**

- **Cheat Mode?**
- **Sound Test**

I'm seriously beginning to wonder if the industrious Bob from Wigtown is actually employed by a mysterious organisation to spend his every waking hour looking for new SNES cheats and tips. The clever chap has already discovered some secret stuff in *Diddy's Kong Quest*.

Clear a saved file and start a new game. An option screen will appear to ask you if you intend to have a solo or two-player game. Move the cursor to the lowest setting (two-player contest mode) and press down on the D-Pad another five times. Bingo – a sneaky music select option scrolls up for your delectation. Press left and right to choose the stage from which the music is taken and just leave it to run.

It doesn't end there. Press down another five times and you'll call up an enigmatic option called Cheat Mode. Unfortunately Bob doesn't explain how to use it, and I must admit that I couldn't work out its purpose either. Take a close look at the accompanying picture where Diddy appears to be reading something called "Sad Mag" – a joke, perhaps? Ho ho, my sides are splitting. If you uncover the secret of this Cheat Mode then please let the rest of us know.

I fear that Ollie's passion for menu screens writ large will be my undoing.

Surely you enter another code here for Cheat Mode – any ideas, folks?

rocket launcher, rocket launcher to plasma rifle... but, alas, not the BFG 9000. If it doesn't seem to work with the pistol, try another weapon.

This little trick appears to be more of a bug than a deliberate cheat, and as such it's not quite as useful or clever as it might seem. The weapons aren't permanently included in your inventory, so you have to repeat the cheat each time. It's also unreliable, and if you've followed our guide over the past few months then you ought to be able to locate such weapons before reaching the chainsaw anyway. But it's worth bearing in mind if you find yourself short of ammunition; you can use the trick repeatedly; and it does let you acquire a plasma rifle during Knee-Deep In the Dead, where none can actually be found. Very handy for those twin Barons at the end of episode one, no? An exclusive *Super Play* badge on its way, Patrick. Mr. Compton is almost satisfied.

My plasma gun froths with orbs of blue death.

polygon objects in Demo Mode. Let the intro sequence run to see it. On second thoughts, don't.

Dear Zy,
On *Zelda III*, how do you get to dungeon three in the Dark World? It's in the forest, but that's past the village and there's a boulder blocking my way which I can't lift. To lift it, I need the other power glove which is in dungeon four, in the VILLAGE!
Scott Munro, Inverness
(Scott illustrates his letter with a picture of a small bald man sporting a nose ring and saying "Grr! Another f@#?!$#g *Zelda* letter!!" and I fear it is supposed to be a likeness of myself).

Zy says:
Let's see, just how do I do it? Okay... Mirror back to the Light World, save, restart your game from Sanctuary.

And that, my friends, is a Good Bee.

Enter the Lost Woods by the route north of Kakariko, take the first right and exit the Wood southwards on the next screen. There's a warp to the Dark World below you but it appears blocked off by a fence. Two pegs on the right of the fence can be flattened by the Magic Hammer you picked up in the Dark Palace. Pick up the small rock, warp, head north and you're in the Skull Forest.

Gerthein Boersma of the Netherlands writes again with more information following *SP*39's *Zelda III* tip. "The Good bee distinguises himself from the normal bee by the trail of stars he leaves behind him as he flies around... It will stick around for an unlimited amount of delivered hits, although it does disappear if you leave the screen."

It seems the Bottle-seller in Kakariko Village is a collector of interesting animals. Release the Good Bee

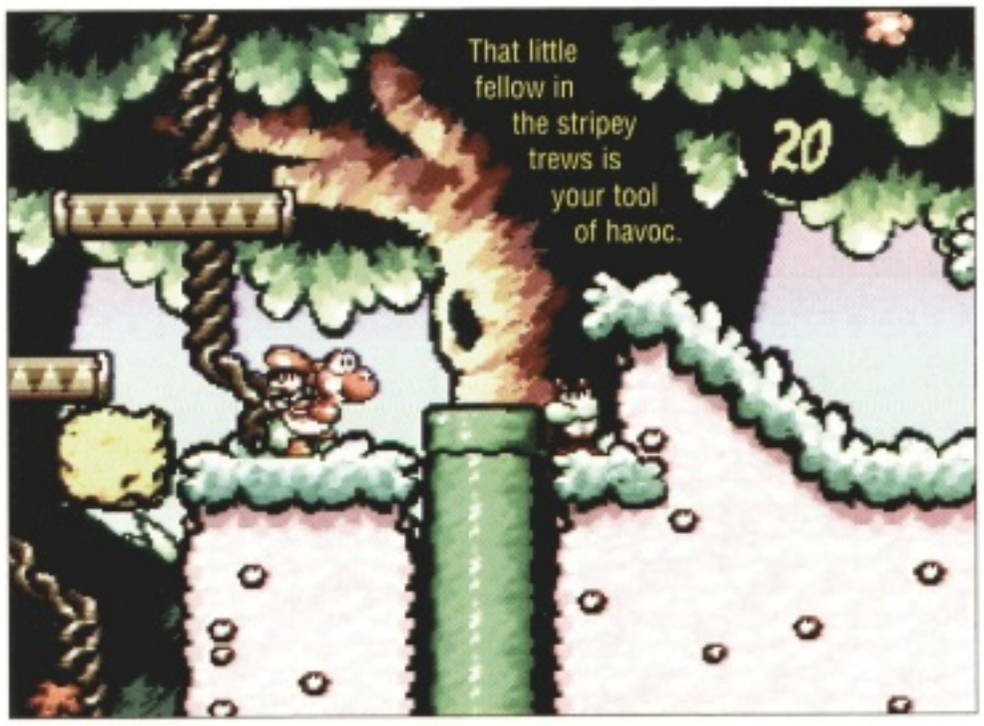
100 Rupees? It must taste delicious.

near him and he'll suggest taking it off your hands to the tune of 100 Rupees. Additionally, have you ever seen the fish that flaps about in the swamp puddles of the Light World after you've flooded the Swamp Palace of the Dark World? You can grab it with your Mitts and throw it in the deeper water north of the puddle for a small reward. But here's the surprise – if you manage to carry it all the way back to Kakariko's Bottle-seller (dropping it occasionally to fend off enemies, but not letting it flounder from the screen) he'll trade it for a small collection of goodies.

I admit it. I'm gobsmacked. I thought I knew this game, having completed it hundreds of times, but Miyamoto surprises me again. More obscure *Zelda* tippage next month.

Zy Nicholson

"Stay back. This fish is loaded."



YOSHI'S ISLAND

(Nintendo)
***SP*36: 94%**

● **Lives Loop**

Although this is rather similar to last month's cheat, it does occur much earlier in the game and is thus potentially more useful to struggling neophytes.

You need only get as far as stage seven of World One to try this out. At the beginning of the level, Yoshi encounters some rather odd fellows who like to roll themselves into stripy balls. When you've built up a full complement of eggs, swallow one of the little blokes and carry him in your mouth to the first pipe that generates Shyguys. Place him between the pipe and the wall (see screenshot), stand above the pipe and shoot an egg harmlessly into the air.

As the Shyguys pour forth, the rotund geezer will spin and destroy each one in turn. Soon you'll see the lives begin to clock up. You can pause the game at any time to see how many you've accumulated.

Congratulations and a Midge Ure moustache to Gerald Ungrad of Austria, who crafted his letter on graph paper with green felt tip to facilitate a handy diagram. Natty.

BASSIN'S BLACK BASS

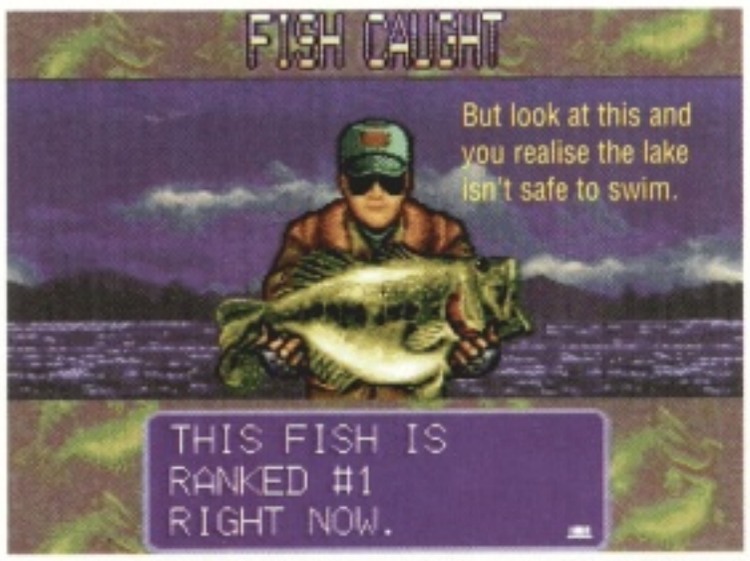
(Hot B)
***SP*34: 65%**

● **Debug mode**
● **Speed up**
● **Catch Random Fish**

Or *Bassin's Black Bass with Hank Parker*, to give it its full US title, this bizarre Sunday afternoon of a game holds a few surprises. To do all the following cheats, you'll need to start in debug mode beforehand. Hold down X and Y on pad one with your left hand and A and B on pad two with your right hand. Now you need to hit Reset while holding these buttons, so unless you've taken the unwise precaution of training your household pets to restart your SNES you'll need to use a spare part of your anatomy.

I love the idea of an angling sim having a 'Fight Map Number'.

Done it? Good. The screen should say 'Debug Mode' before the title screen appears. Start a game and go to the 'Boating' screen. Call up the menu (Cast, Info etc) and hold A on pad two. Now select Cast to go to the 'Fishing' screen. Instead, you should see a debug menu that allows you to change the stage, clock time, weather conditions, water temperature – you can even



COMPTON'S MOST WANTED

"Mr Compton here. Be reasonable, old chep – you've got cheats, and cheats are my business. Be A chep and hand them over."

If good cheats are like fine wine, I'd like you to pop the corks on the following bottles of beaujolais. Tips for the following games are highly desirable.

I'm beginning to think they didn't have space to include a cheat. Have they no respect for my art?

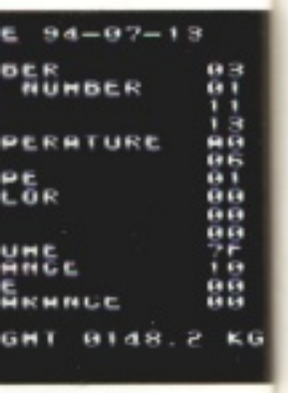
(1) Diddy's Kong Quest
I suggest another code needs entering at the Cheat Mode prompt. Ideas are welcome.

I also believe this game boasts level warps, much like the first. Kindly investigate.

What word is entered at Cheat Mode?

(2) Secret Of Evermore
Anyone? Anyone? Or am I to understand this isn't popular?

(3) Doom
A genuine code has still to be found. I won't ask again, damn you.



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he 'Boating'
e menu (Cast,
A on pad two.
Now select
Cast to go to
the 'Fishing'
screen.
Instead, you
should see a
debug menu
that allows
you to change
the stage,
clock time,
weather
conditions,
water
temperature –
you can even

ore
r am I to
popular?

still to be
gain, damn you.

get a sound test, if you're in the mood for some ambient aquatic accompaniments.

If you want to speed up the timeflow, go to the Boating screen and press X on pad two.

You can also use debug mode to cheat on your haul. Once you're in the Fishing screen, you will automatically catch a randomly-sized fish by pressing B (for Bass) or Y (for non-Bass). I regret to admit that my record-breaking 22lb Largemouth, with which I intimidated Rob Pegley on *TOTAL!*, was acquired in this underhand fashion – let's hope he doesn't read this.

That's nothing. I caught a 500lb Gerard Depardieu the other day.

FINAL FANTASY III

(Squaresoft)
*SP*26: 95%

● AR code sound test

This month's Action Replay section is devoted to the work of top Spanish codemeister Aitor A.B. of Cantabria. Somewhere between taking exams, improving his English and playing *Chrono Trigger*, Aitor has worked overtime to produce a sound test code for *FFIII*. A star prize is on its way.

I've tested this cheat with the Action Replay mk2. Unfortunately, you'll need to say goodbye to your saved files – at least one, if not all, will be lost when you plug in your cart (try using a key cart without battery backup or FX/DSP chips).

Sound Test

Enter the codes:
7E1F 80xx
7E00 1500
7E00 5903
and start the game. Don't switch the AR cheat function on until you see the intro (you can press A for speed). The menu will appear. Start a new game and exit the menu (which is the purpose of the third code). You may need to enter and exit the menu again to get it rolling, but when it does you should flick straight to the tune denoted by number xx (see table).

We're going to indulge Aitor by listing the unofficial names he invented for each track. The first number is to be entered in the xx space, the time given is for a single loop of that track. Listen and enjoy.

More *FFIII* codes

7E7A 85xx
Choose magic!
When you enter a fight, switch the AR on with this code entered and cast an offensive magic. All your characters will instead perform the attack determined by number xx. Of especial interest are the Espers (36 to 50 hex), the Desperation attacks (F0 to FB) and oddities such as D1 (Siegfried's Hyper Drive!). Just try any number and see what you get.

7E00 1500
Fast title screen
7E00 4A03
Changes intro scroll
7E00 4Fxx
Controls light
7E00 5603
Calls 'fighting mode'
7E00 5904
Sends you to the menu
7E00 E301
Image fading
7E11 E2xx
Select battle background
7E11 E0xx
Use these codes to select enemies
7E11 E7xx
Try it with 7E00 5603

A splendid piece of work by Aitor, and we'll be printing more of his electronic probing in future issues.

FINAL FANTASY III TRACK LISTING

01	A quiet place 1'15"
02	Bad times are coming 36"
03	Story begins 33"
04	Theme of *FFIII* 52"
05	Terra's unknown past 45"
06	A dangerous journey 1'48"
07	Only me and my dog (Shadow) 45"
08	Thamasa, ancient MagiTown 59"
09	I'm a beast (Gau's theme) 1'10"
0A	Anthem of Figaro Kingdom 1'10"
0B	Separated fates 1'28"
0C	Knights of Doma Castle (Cyan) 1'05"
0D	I love stealin' (Locke) 55"
0E	After death nothing awaits 1'18"
0F	Drawing the life (Relm's theme) 1'08"
10	I'd bet my Grandma (Setzer) 40"
11	Setzer's Lover (Daryl) 1'15"
12	All is over 1'18"
13	Chocobo TechDance 56"
14	Hard Encounters 55"
15	Rock heat 1'19"
16	I wanna be very bad (Kefka) 1'17"
17	Lost in deep caves 1'19"
18	Spring Water Song 1'22"
19	Wild dance party time 1'05"
1A	Running against time 52"
1B	Empire of Evil 1'25"
1C	Who were Gestahl's fans? 52"
1D	Rest peacefully waiting the war 52"
1E	SFX – Barren Falls
1F	Time goes away 36"
20	SFX?*
21	Esper's eerie song 1'07"
22	Rats! 1'27"
23	Don't look down 1'10"
24	Ready for battle? 54"
25	What did I win? 02"
26	Classical waltz 38"
27	Oh, my hero (Celes) 1'42"
28	Waterworld (he, he!) 58"
29	A grey day in Zozo 59"
2A	Towns of calmness 1'14
2B	Crazy, crazy, crazy I am 1'08"
2C	SFX – crowds
2D	Inside a man-eater (Gogo) 57"
2E	Brave soldiers 55"
2F	Winning is all in life 30"
30	Sasquatches smell bad (Umaro) 46"
31	Be a moogle, kupoppo (Mog) 46"
32	Sabin and Vargas battle 53"
33	Atma Goddess 1'08"
34	Albrook Town 59"
35	Flying over the sky 56"
36	Close to death 58"
37	Jidoor, a musical town 58"
38	Rest in peace 05"
39	SFX – winds of despair
3A	SFX – Phantom Train
3B	Final battle of the Gods?*
3C	SFX – waves at the beach
3D	Opera piano solo 1'00"
3E	Fallen in battle 14"
3F	SFX – Chocobo steps
40	SFX – rain
41	Opera overture 52"
42	Opera – Act 2, perhaps? 21"
43	Opera – another movement 1'23"
44	Rats again! 16"
45	The Hero appears 22"
46	Time trax 59"
47	Industrial Factory 59"
48	SFX – laser
49	SFX – engine room
4A	SFX – fire
4B	Floating Continent 1'14"
4C	Flying over the chaos 1'15"
4D	Cult to Kefka 38"
4E	Into Kefka Tower 1'15"
4F	World of Ruin theme 1'22"
50	Ultima battle 2'35"
51	nothing (key to 20 & 3B?)*
52	Final Fantasy 31"
53	Magic fades out 10'59"
54	Final Song 10'33"

* Aitor couldn't get the baroque piece from the final battle to work, but thinks code 51 might be the key to accessing it somehow.

PAC MAN 2: THE NEW ADVENTURES

(Namco)
*SP*35: 70%

- **Pattern test**
- **Sound test**
- **Time trial**

A few months ago we ran passwords for cutting straight to the old '80s coin-ops tucked away in *PM2:TNA* (PCMNDPW and MSPCMND) but I've since discovered a few more wonders that can be accessed through passwords that are abbreviations of their functions.

PCMNPTT

This is PaCMan PaTTern test, abbreviated. To call up a sound test menu, enter...

BGMRQST

Which I'm guessing stands for BackGround Music ReQueST, no? Oh well, seems to make sense to me, and it works. Finally, try out...

TRLMDPW

Which is a Time TRiaL Direct PassWord – or Tony's ReaLly Miserable, Don't Phone this Week. Okay, So it doesn't always work perfectly.

WEAPONLORD

(Ocean/Namco)
*SP*36: 75%

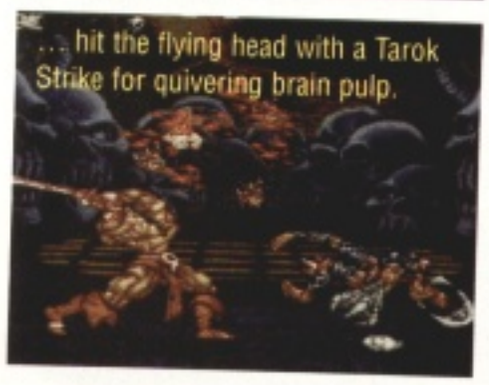
● **General carnage**

I've had a few questions about hidden moves and fatalities in *Weaponlord*, and I thought it was time to reveal some multiple death combos. These are the ludicrously gory finishing moves that contain several different mutilation techniques to kill your opponent outright. Since the game slows down when you kill your foe, you should pay special attention to your timing. A small tip – any special move that can form part of a death combo will cause the screen to go dark like a true fatality, even if you aren't declared "victorious". Use this as your litmus for discovering new death moves.

This is by no means intended as a comprehensive guide: I'm just eager for other players to send in what they've found, so I've listed here what I discovered in the course of reviewing the game. I'm also not sure why the scalping moves work against some characters and not others. It's probably obvious that I'm most familiar with Korr, but his moves should serve as an example for exploring other characters (they're all very similar, unfortunately).

Notation: FST and BST mean Forestrike/thrust and Backstrike/thrust respectively. All special moves work with either strike or thrust, although they may effect a different strength and range of attack.

KORR

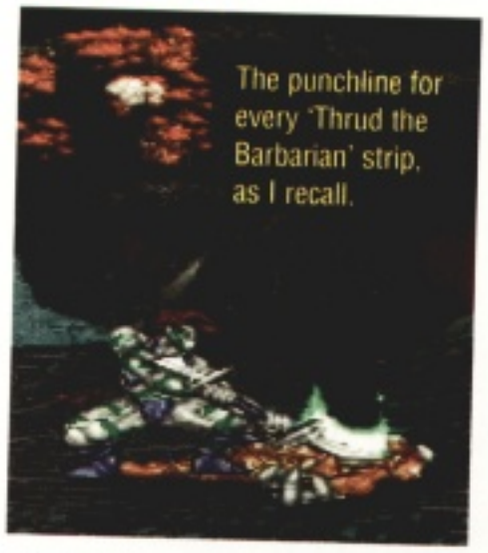


Heart Strike: Hold BST, U, U, D
Knee-Tarok: F, D, F+FST
Power Push: F, D, B+ BST
360° Flame Strike: Hold BST, F, U, F
Elbow Smash: F, F + FST
Power Deflect: Hold FST, F, D, B
Air Block: jump in, hold Fore/Backslice plus Down
Decapitation: Knee-Tarok OR death combo plus Tarok Strike
Disembowelment: Gut Slash, Gut Slash
Head Pulp: Decapitation plus Tarok Strike
Rib Cage Explosion: death combo plus Heart Strike
Knockdown two-in-one: Elbow Smash, Heart Strike
Scalping: Gut Slash, Tarok Strike (close)
Six-hit Combo: Gut Slash, Backstrike, Firestorm
Multiple Death Combo: Gut Slash, Gut Slash, Tarok Strike, Heart Strike
Mega Death Combo: jump in, Backthrust, crouching Backstrike, Gut Slash, Tarok Strike, Tarok Strike (on flying head), Heart Strike.

JEN-TAI

Shield Spike: B, F, FST
Back Hand Blast: Hold BST, B, U, F
Ram Toss: Hold FST, F, U, B
Aura Strike: B, D, B, BST
Heart Strike: Hold BST, U, U, D
Scalping: Shield Spike, Back Blade Strike (close)
Decapitation: Back Blade Strike
Disembowelment: move plus Shield Spike
Head Pulp: Decapitation plus Back Blade Strike or Back Hand Blast
Rib Cage Explosion: Death Combo plus Leg Breaker
Five-hit Combo: Backstrike, Shield Spike, Death Blade
Mega Death Combo: Backstrike, Shield Spike, Back Blade Strike, Back Hand Blast, Leg Breaker

DIVADA



Hell Deflect: Hold FST, B, D, F
Heel Kick: F, F + FST
Orb Of Souls: Hold BST, U, U, UF
Scalping: crouching Forethrust, Psycho Blades
Disembowelment: Psycho Blades
Decapitation: Power Flip on fallen foe or during death combo
Head Pulp: Decapitation plus Power Flip
Rib Cage Explosion: death combo plus Ground Blast
Knockdown two-in-one: Power Flip, Ground Blast
Multiple Death Combo: Psycho Blades, Power Flip, Power Flip (on flying head), Ground Blast.

ZORN

Shield Crack: Hold BST, U, B, D
Corpse Striker: Hold BST, chD, U, UF
Demon Axe: Hold FST, chB, D, F
Roll: F, D, B + BST
Axe Lift: Hold FST, U, B, D
Decapitation: Demon Axe OR Corpse Striker on fallen foe
Disembowelment: move plus Hell Fire
Scalping: finish combo with Head Grinder (close)
Body Explosion: death combo plus Hell Grinder
Head Pulp: Decapitation plus Shield Scream.

TALAZIA

Prey Launch: B, D, F + BST
Falcon Strike: Hold FST, U, B, D
Double Talon Strike: Hold BST, F, D, F
Reverse Claw: Hold BST, F, U, B
Air Frenzy: Hold FST, U, F, U
Two-in-one: Rip Claw, Rip Claw
Four-hit Combo: Forethrust, Rip Claw, Double Talon Strike
Eight-hit whirlwind combo: jump in, Forestrike, Rip Claw, Air Frenzy

BANE

Iron Fist: B, F + BST
Head Rocker: F, D, F + BST
Curse Slam: Hold BST, F, U, B
Fang Gutter: B, D, F + FST
Scalping: Fang Gutter, Fang Gutter
Disembowelment: Fang Gutter, Fang Gutter
Head Explosion: Berserker

ZARAK:

Warp Spider: Hold BST, F, U, B
Guillotine Strike: Hold BST, chD, U, UF
Power Slice: Hold FST, U, F, D
Widow Grip: Hold BST, chB, D, F
Power Vault: B, D, F + FST
Decapitation: Guillotine Strike on fallen foe.

combo with
ose)
: death combo
r
apitation plus

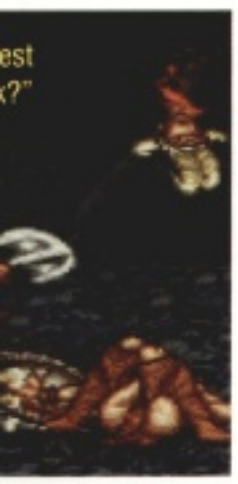
D, F + BST
old FST, U, B, D
rike: Hold BST,

Hold BST, F, U, B
d FST, U, F, U
Claw, Rip Claw
: Forethrust, Rip
lon Strike
vind combo:
ke, Rip Claw,

BST
D, F + BST
d BST, F, U, B
D, F + FST
Gutter, Fang

nt: Fang Gutter,

: Berserker



old BST, F, U, B
e: Hold BST,

ld FST, U, F, D
ld BST, chB, D, F
D, F + FST
illotine
oe.

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'ATTITUDE OF IRRELEVANCE'

I am writing (*Yeeesss... – Ed*) to complain about the falling standards of journalism we have noticed in your publication. The quality and content has decreased dramatically over the past year, since the departure of Mr. Bielby. I feel you would be much better off adopting the old *Your Sinclair* attitude of irrelevance , and with only a passing glance at the games on review. *Your Sinclair*, eh? What a mag. Remember the Hold My Hand Very Tightly free tape by Davey 'Whistlin' Rick Wilson? (*No, we can remember Hold My Hand Tightly (Very Tightly), though – Ed*) How we lament their passing. If only *Splay* signed up some of the old *YS* stewlarts such as Dunc MacDonald and Dave MacCandless. Ah well. I s'pose it's wishful thinking.

Craig Thomson, Irvine.

First of all, 'Mr. Bielby' walked out of this office some two-and-a-half years ago, so it's obviously good to see you paying close attention to what's going on around you.

Now. When you're talking about Speccy games at around seven notes a throw it's perhaps acceptable to piss about a bit. When you're talking seven times that amount for a SNES cartridge, though, it's plain common sense that you're offered some clear buying advice, which we offer lots of. We like 'funny' things too, honest – why, only the other day we laughed until we retched when Wil forgot to wear any trousers to work – but our chief reason for being here is to give you the best SNES and Ultra 64 coverage around.

If you really want to buy a videogame mag that, well, doesn't talk about videogames, try *Amiga Power* – we understand that it's both 'irrelevant' and 'funny'.

(We intended to get hold of some 'old *YS* stewlarts' as you suggested, incidentally, but no-one had the faintest idea what a 'stewlart' is, so we didn't get very far. Still, eh?)

'A BIT DEPRESSED'

I thought I'd better reply to my namesake's moan on the price of some recent game releases i.e. *Doom* and *Killer Instinct*.

He says he was disappointed to find that when he wanted to buy one of them they were in the £60-£65 bracket. Well he didn't look any further than the end of his nose, did he! When I buy a game I search out the cheapest place *then* buy. Makes sense, eh? *Doom* – £42. Where? Our Price, that's where! *Killer Instinct* – £47 Where? Toys R Us – and they gave away a free T-shirt with it for that price! *ISSD* also £42 in Our Price or £45 in Woolworths. I've found that the best places for buying the latest releases at the best prices have to be Future Zone, Game and Our Price, with the latter being consistently the best.

On a completely different note, I'm getting a bit depressed waiting for the release of the Ultra 64. We seem to have been waiting an eternity and now it looks like September '96. Come on Nintendo, we're waiting!!

Peter Lee, Huntingdon, Cambs

We find it difficult to imagine someone buying a game the moment they see it on a shelf, without bothering to shop around. We can only quote mufacturers' recommended retail prices when we review games, but we'd say always keep an eye on Toys R Us.

'UP WITH KNOBS'

STAR LETTER

It's not often that I write to a magazine, and even less often that I write in response to someone else's letter. But I did agree with the basic thrust cut-and-thrust of Martin Mather's argument in issue 39 – I absolutely despise magazines that on the one hand rubbish the new machines on the basis of whatever beat-'em-ups and racers they have or haven't got. Not all magazines are guilty – *Super Play* certainly isn't – but the ones that are, are *terrible*. A special mention to whoever wrote the review of in *UFG* of PlayStation *Parodius* – a game designed to be the pinnacle of the side-on shooter genre – who said "Certainly great and all that... but aaargh, it's not fair, there's no 3D bits." Cretin. But Martin was clearly kicking at the wrong targets. *Super Play*, for example, is very fair and even-handed (*Thanks – Ed*).

Oh and Martin, the reason people buy trash like *Arse Of The Robots* is because they don't listen, or rather they would if the right signals were being sent out. Time Warner's much-reported review policy, which ensured the game would be on the shelves weeks before any criticism could be levelled at it, must rank as the very worst offence committed by a major software house. And no high-ranking magazine can justify a preview – the word 'preview' implying that they haven't seen the finished game – that is basically a waste of space saying, "This looks great, but it'll probably be sh*t."

Like Martin obviously does, I also get very depressed when I watch the old school of games design brushed aside in favour of short-lived stuff with wafer-thin depth and a tart's makeover. I was playing *Air Combat* recently in Virgin: a crowd was going "ooh" as I effortlessly shot down plane after plane, while I stood there thinking, What's so impressive? There's nothing to this – the old *Star Wars* coin-op was miles better. Too many next-gen games are going the same way as the arcades have, each being an intense, but brief and expensive thrill (as 80% of current Saturn games are). It's no wonder that of all the coin-ops I play, the bulk of them are at least five years old.

I also reckon it's a big mistake for the SNES to try and compete on the superconsoles' terms. Laudable though a SNES version of *Doom* may be, it is nonetheless sadly inferior – and 20 quid more expensive – than the PlayStation version (probably the best to date). This does not makes the SNES look good. On the other hand, *MK3* and *NBA Jam TE* are as close to the superconsole version as anyone could wish, without the need for any extra chips. But the crowning glories of the SNES have been and always will be the original titles developed solely for it (not just by Miyamoto and co.). I can't see a 3D rendered *Final Fantasy* game taking such extreme liberties with the basic format and still remaining as good as its SNES forebears. Likewise, the new 3D *Zelda*

'NEAREST AND DEAREST'

I bought a SNES when it was was first released, but later sold it to buy an – ahem – Amiga (face colours red with embarrassment). When I realised I had bought a football management simulator (see the Amiga's top ten if you need proof) I quickly sold it to some unsuspecting soul and bought a SNES once again. My hunger for decent games was quickly satisfied. To all those people wanting to ditch their SNES for a 32-bit consoles – hold on! I hired a PlayStation last weekend and, yes, it does have jaw-dropping graphics but with all the games I played there wasn't one that made me want to go back to it all the time – it was just like a quick visit to the arcades really.

By comparison I hired *Donkey Kong Country* this weekend and I am nearly always on it at the moment (much to the annoyance of my nearest and dearest).

I would advise poeople to wait for the NU64 as Nintendo machines always seem to have the most playable and addictive games available.

By the way, what does ACM stand for when discussing *DKC*'s graphics?

Craig Thomson, Lincoln.

Donkey Kong Country isn't the most ideal example to use when highlighting the gulf which generally exists between SNES and 32-bit gameplay, but you've made a valid point. One of the problems faced by developers working on 32-bit CD systems is that of size: if they were to produce a *Zelda* clone on the PlayStation, for example, the scale of the thing would be such that it'd require development time that they're not willing – or able – to invest. It's much easier to knock out a driving game or beat-'em-up in nine months and get the product out onto the shelves to start making money. Nintendo don't work with such an approach, of course, the obvious downside of which being that the Ultra 64 is likely to lag far behind established 32-bit machines in terms of software choice.

ACM stands for Advanced Computer Modelling.

'ANIME WAS RUBBISH'

I just wanted to say well done to Channel 4 for their run of anime during the Autumn, because before I saw *Cyber City* I thought anime was rubbish but now I realise it's really brilliant, and I think this letter raises the question, "Should more anime be shown on British television?"

Michael Shields, Co. Down, N.I.

Well that was a quick change around. We're sure that both Manga and *OEDO*'s creators would be thrilled that they'd made such an easy convert. Had you decided that all anime was rubbish before seeing any or was it just *Cyber City* you liked? Yes, of course *Super Play* would like to see more anime on TV. It's the only real way to turn it from what is still essentially a cult phenomenon into mainstream entertainment. Although we applaud Channel 4 for taking the plunge recently with their Manga Video late night slot we would clap even harder if they found room for something a bit earlier in the schedule. There are many superb series that don't contain anything for the censors to get upset about and knock the spots off the usual imported American cartoons. How about *Mobile Police Patlabor* or *Secret Of Blue Water* in what was the Irwin Allen sci-fi slot on a Sunday morning? By the way, if you've been up early enough recently you might have spotted a sort-of anime – the French/Japanese co-production *Ulysses 31*.

'HARD TO SLIP IN'

I have just received a copy of *Doom* for the SNES. Brilliant graphics, chilling sound, addictive gameplay, but wait, what's this – NO SAVE?! Not even a password function. *Doom* is a brilliant game and nobody can contradict

KINDLY LEAVE THE STAGE

Q Why do MPs hate Scottish pine?
A Because it's Redwood.
John Tuttle, Sheffield
1/10

Q Did you hear about the short-sighted doctor who attempted a circumcision operation?
A He missed and got the sack.
Geoff Bun, Clwyd
2/10

Q What's brown, has six legs, and would kill you if it fell out of a tree on top of you?
A A snooker table.
Clinton Arthur Forbes, St. Ann, Jamaica
4/10

Princess Di went into a pub and asked for a pint of lager. The barmaid replied, "Will Carling do?"
Andrew Clarkson, Goole, North Humberside
5/10

Get 5/10 or above for your joke and win something spesh! Kindly Leave The Stage, Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

THE SUPER PLAY INTERESTING-O-METER

HOT

- **The Ultra 64** We have seen the future, and it kicks arse!
- **8-bit emulators** *Knight Lore* on the Mac! *Yesss*
- **Table football** Spinning's banned, though
- **Fast Show repeats** Cheesy Peas? Yes please
- **Oasis** *Still* switched on, somehow
- **Blur** Took a dive in '95. What for '96?
- ***Hollyoaks*** Like, just so well-observed
- **Pool** Too much walking involved for a pub-based activity
- **Clueless retrogaming articles** Just how many of these ill-informed features can we possibly stand?
- **32-bit consoles** Suckers!

NOT

may well be awesome to play as a beat-'em-up with knobs on, but it won't feel the same as the originals – the 'exploration and adventure' element won't be so much at the fore (though it could be argued that *Zelda* has gone about as far as it can in its current incarnation). And name one superconsole platformer or racing games that can compete in depth, gameplay and lastability stakes with either *Yoshi's Island* or *Mario Kart*. You can't, basically, because there isn't one.

David Sanders, Co. Londonderry, N.I.

There's nothing inherently wrong with coin-ops as subject matter for console games – *Street Fighter II*, in whatever incarnation, remains one of the most durable of all SNES releases, and it's one of the most successful coin-ops of all time. People will always want to play games like *Virtua Fighter 2* or *Tekken* in the home: both offer loads of long-term appeal and playability to die for. The problem arises with other types of coin-op – *Air Combat* is a good example – which offer little or no replay value, and should never be made into console games without *serious* enhancements. Sega are slowly learning this, and offering various enhanced playing modes in Saturn games such as *Sega Rally*, so the situation might be improving...

Regarding SNES *Doom*, we reckon that a version of the game which isn't the best one available will always be preferable to no version at all. And comparing versions of the same game on different formats has little real value other than feeling superior/inferior because of your choice of machine, after all.

Forecasting how 3D versions of games such *Final Fantasy* and *Zelda* will turn out is almost impossible. We were dubious as to how Mario was going to appear in such an environment having been so firmly a 2D character up until now, but *Super Mario 64* is shaping up to be a stunner, which bodes well for every 64 title. It's certainly unfair to claim that the exploration and adventure element of Ultra 64 *Zelda* will be lacking: those two factors were Miyamoto's prime considerations when he devised the series, and they're not going to be diluted now.

We can't think of any superconsole *YI* or *SMK*-beaters either. Now have this cart for sending the Star Letter. Gosh.

that, but having to do the first few levels repeatedly is tiresome even on the greatest of games. Surely it would not have been hard to slip in a password function or level select.

I see that the Ultra 64 will have a special memory card that will slot into the back of the joypad and be used to save games and joypad combinations. Will you be able to save positions on puzzle games like *Zoop*. It's a great idea, but is there any hope for a similar SNES device?

Anthony Fletcher, Guildon Sutton, Chester.

We were a bit baffled by *Doom*'s lack of friendliness, too, and we're still waiting for someone to uncover some cheats for it...

The Ultra 64's memory cards will be used in the same way that SNES carts featuring battery-backed RAM do now – for saving game positions, times, etc. Because there's no extra expense in producing a game which offers such capacity on the Ultra 64, however, it's likely that a whole host of other types of game will let you do things such as save high scores and stuff. We're not too sure how it'll cope with puzzle game postions, though...

'BITES OF THE CHERRY'

I have recently bought and sold a PlayStation. I wasn't sure at the time whether to get Sony's machine or a Saturn, and I now realise that I am better off without either. Instead I'll carry on enjoying my SNES for a long while yet, and I'll definitely be buying an Ultra 64 when it comes out here officially.

I for one realise that the SNES is only just showing its full potential in the console race – the Mega Drive may have a larger back catalogue of games, but what is quantity compared with quality in the form of classics like *Zelda*, *Gaia*, *Mana*, *Mario*, etc. Nintendo certainly aren't showing any signs of giving up on what I consider to be the best games machine available bar none.

Until the Ultra 64 arrives I'll carry on using the SNES and look forward to having two bites of the cherry.

D. Brooks, Sutton In Ashfield, Notts

If someone wanted to get into gaming right now, the SNES would be the best machine to buy if you take into account each and every aspect of the systems available.

A lot of SNES owners have been sucked of late in by the quality of the very small number of truly impressive 32-bit games, though, and Sony and Sega are laughing all the way to the bank accordingly.

As we've been saying for ages, the SNES is far from dead, and the most switched-on gamers at the moment are those saving their cash for an Ultra 64 to place alongside their evergreen 16-bit.

'THE PEEPS'

I am writing... only joking, I wouldn't dare raise your hackles with that opening.

I want to complain about the air of negativity about some of the peeps at Shoshinkai, regarding the NU64. If I may quote your quotation (ahem) from ish 40, page 7: "It's not really doing much that we haven't seen on the PlayStation – take away its mipmap interpolation and there's not much left to get excited about"

Super Play correctly pointed out that Nintendo are more concerned with gameplay (hence the new pad) but to my mind you failed to point out the fundamental flaw in Mr. Developer's argument. Let me put it this way. Despite having been out for quite a while, the Sony machine is still widely regarded as a stunning piece of kit. Industry-watchers are saying that the Ultra 64 is not much better, and can't generate a lot more polygons than the PlayStation. IS THAT A CRITICISM? The Mario game is nearest to completion at 50 per cent, and yet still does tricks that the PlayStation cannot manage. Even if, technically, NU64 games don't annihilate PlayStation games, I for one won't be disappointed. It won't be long before we have *Mario, Mario Kart, KI, StarWing, Zelda,*

HIGHLIGHTS

'The motto of the gaming intelligentsia – "Graphics don't matter, it's gameplay that counts" – is not strictly true.'
V. Goodfellow, Nr. Horsham, W. Sussex
Hey, someone really *does* listen to what we say. Hats of to you, Goodfellow.

'I wish *Super Play* covered PlayStation games – I'm fed up with having to buy crappy mags to read reviews for my other machine.'
Paul Clifford-Jones, Oxford
Nice idea, but we just couldn't face all that extra FMV tat. Sorry.

'Why does Tony always hide his face in the profiles bit of the mag?'
Ceri Elford, Basingstoke
Okay, just for you, here's a pic of the bloke in question. Now do you begin to see why?

'Isn't January the most depressing month.'
Mark Edwards, Plymouth, Devon
Yeah, whoever invented it should be shot.

ENVELOPE ART

Get creative, then get a stamp. Address: Envelope Art, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

WINNER

Following a bitter and bloody fight, the *Super Play* logo comes off second best to Ryu in this fabby piccy from... From? Well? *From?* Ah, it would appear that they didn't put their name on their envelope. Truly a lesson to us all.

This busy *Arislan* piccy came from Rawya A. Al Malik, Dubai who hails from the United Arab Emirates. Oddly, the back of the envelope was decorated with flowery wallpaper. (Which Wil quickly made off with, claiming it would come in handy to cover the damp patch in his spare room. He's so ker-razee.)

gstoke
here's a pic
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most
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month.'
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Mana, *Final Fantasy*, *PilotWings*, and p'raps a new *Street Fighter*, not only with the best graphics around, but with that *Street Fighter* (NOT Capcom)/Square/Nintendo magic that many other games are lost without. Sony can't dream of matching that, Sega are out of the picture (fun-in-the-short-term coin-ops do not good console games make), and so-called industry-watchers criticise the big N at their peril.

I'm not so narrow-minded as to suggest that every NU64 game will be a ground-breaker, but I have every confidence in Nintendo producing the best games of the year – much as they did with the SNES in 1991.

Gray Russell, via the Internet

Well said, sir.

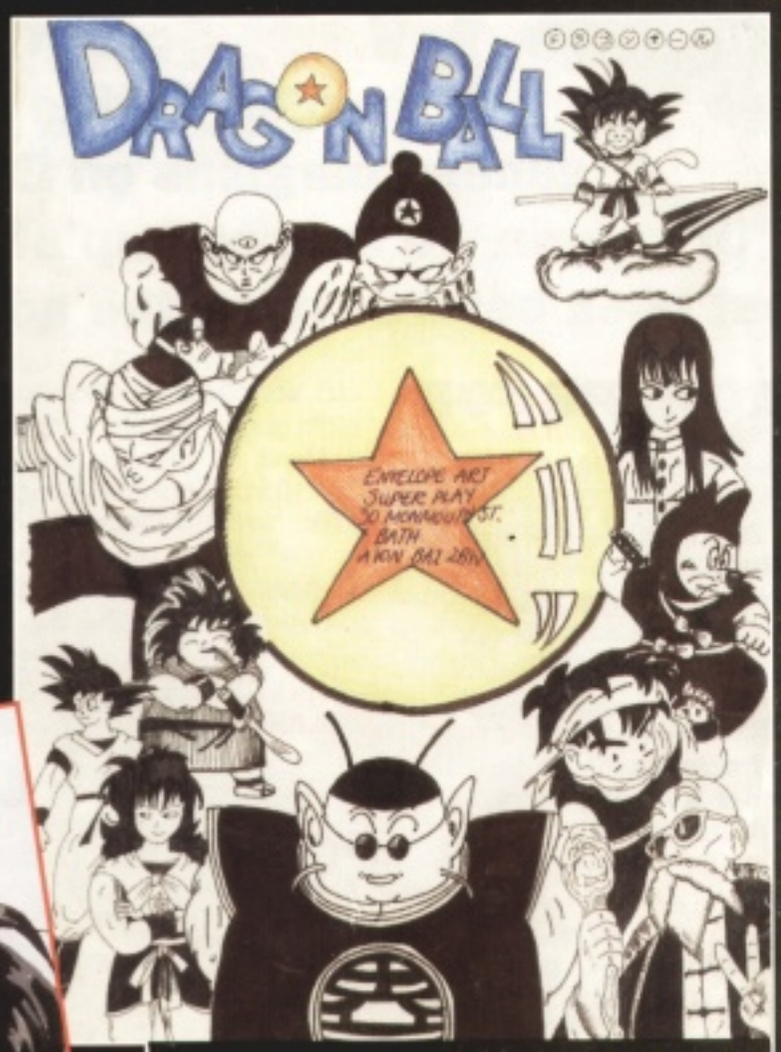
WRITE NOW!

Send us your Nintendo-related musings, rants, moans, groans, dribbles or wibbles and you can win a prize of a spanky new cart.

Aim your creative missives at the following address:

PLAYBACK
SUPER PLAY,
30 MONMOUTH STREET,
BATH, AVON, BA1 2BW.

'Rag & Laz' of Halesowen, West Midlands sent this rather trippy *Sailor Moon*-based wedding pic. These people have some little workshop going it seems – Rag was responsible for 'pencils' here, while Laz handled 'inks and colour' duties. Hmm.



This magnificent *DB* image is the work of Irene Tran of Hackney, London. Although most (if not all) of the elements have been copied from various sources, it adds up to an impressive piece of work. And check out Kamesennin, down at the bottom right. It was his appearance that really clinched it.

This brillo painted rendition of Skuld from *Oh My Goddess!* comes from Yee Ping Kuit of Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire. Tony says it reminds him of an ex-girlfriend. It must be the big mallet, we reckon.

Following a bitter bloody fight, the *Super Play* logo comes off second best to Ryu in this shabby piccy from... from? Well? *From?* Ah, it would appear that they didn't put their name on their envelope. Truly a lesson to us all.

Tony Man from sunny Southend-on-Sea is the sender of this picture of... um... two people we don't actually recognise. There may be a *Street Fighter* connection – check out the writing on the foreground character's headband – but we're fair flummoxed on the whole. Anyway, what we were particularly impressed with was the fine paint-strokish method in which the background character has been drawn.

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FREE ADS

SUPER MARKET

Scour these pages for the best gaming bargains on Earth. Of course we snapped up all the best ones before typing the ads in.

HARDWARE FOR SALE

● SNES which takes Eng/Jap games. SNES games with SSFII, SFII Turbo, Super Soccer, Pilot Wings, Mario World, two controllers, SCART leads & carry case with *SP* mags. Sell for £130 ono. Tel: 01753 710608.

● UK SNES, two joypads, programmable joystick, 11 games, 20 issues of *Super Play*, tip books and carry case. Tel: Phil (Andover) 01264 334133.

● US Pal booster. No box, but good condition, £20 ono. Tel: 01734 832955, ask for Chris.

● SNES for sale. Fire FX convertor, two joypads, books, mags, SFII, Super Mario World, Starwing & Sim City – only £85. Phone Charlie 01935 822620, after 6pm.

● Game Boy for sale with six games, Kirby's Pinball, Mario 1, 2 & 3, Snoopy's Magic Show and Tiny Toons. Sell for £45-50. Tel: 01422 839298, ask for Mark.

● UK SNES, two pads, multitap and six games. Worth £404, sell for only £150. Also throw in 26 mags worth £76. Tel: 01984 624658.

● SNES with three controllers and top games, including Killer Instinct and MK2. Everything boxed and in excellent condition. Will sell for £200. Tel: 0181 964 2958.

● SNES for sale with seven games including Mortal Kombat 3 & Super Mario Kart, plus two control pads and control stick. All for £150 ono. Tel: 01225 316396.

● Atari Lynx plus Zarlor, Californian Games, Slime World, Crystal Mines 2, £40. Tel: Craig 01223 842230, after 5pm.

● US PlayStation, SCART lead, memory card, Ridge Racer (US), Tekken (US), Wipeout (US), demo disks. All spotless condition, two months old, all receipts, £335 ono. Tel: Giles 0181 505 6387.

● Jap SNES Pal (switchable 50-60 Hz), scart lead, SFX converter & eight games incl SFII Turbo, Secret of Mana, two joypads. Excellent condition, all boxed with instructions £200. Tel: 01277 232460.

● Super Nintendo (UK). ten games, two pads, Super Game Boy, boxed with instructions. Mint condition, worth £700, sell for £400. Tel: 0181 304 8565 after 4.30pm.

● SNES with five games & Super Game Boy, complete with three controllers & joystick, Mario Paint. All together £170 ono or games £10 each. G Hinks, 36 Church Drive, Glengormley, Co Antrim, N Ireland, BT36 6EX.

● US SNES (15 games) & Mega Drive (five games). All boxed and in good condition with manuals, £175 ono. Tel: 01937 574244.

● SNES for sale, eight games, one controller. Games inc Jedi, E Jim and Sim City, & four tips books, boxed, £100 ono. Tel: 01234 218997.

● PC Engine GT, handheld and Core Graphics machines with Bomberman, PC Kid 2, Cyber Combat Police and Gradius Cards, only £160 the lot. Also Jaguar with five top games £160. Tel: 01934 833788.

● Official Neo-geo CD for sale. Fully boxed with two joypads & UK Samurai Showdown II. Mint condition, runs UK/Jap/US CDs, £100 ono. Tel: 0171 482 7374.

● UK SNES for sale. Boxed with five pads, Hudson multi-tap, Super Bomberman 2 & Starwing (both UK). £70 ono. Tel: 0171 482 7374.

● For Sale: Nintendo Game Boy, no marks or scratches. If interested, phone Ian on 0181 890 1632.

● UK Super NES plus SMAS, Killer Instinct, Yoshi's Island, Earthworm Jim 2, Super Bomberman 3 and Power Drive. All for £180. Tel: 01708 453502.

● SNES (UK) for sale £50 inc Super Mario & box etc. Games (UK) Rise of the Robots £7, Super Metroid £15, Mortal Kombat 2 £15, Killer Instinct £30 etc. Tel: 0181 788 8290. SNES & nine games incl adaptor. £120 ono. Tel: 0181 788 8290.

● American SNES, still boxed, very good condition with 14 games. All £150 worth £250. Tel: 0181 985 1452, ask for Kevin.

● Game Boy with six games – Tetris, Kick Off, NBAII, Sneaky Snakes, Splitz, Home Alone 2, Gamerace, Gameboy hard carry case, two-player lead, mostly boxed with instructions. £60 no offers. Tel: 0116 291 0374 (Leicester).

● Jaguar for sale, two pads, nine top titles incl Rayman, Theme Park, Cheq Flag, Raiden, Cybermorph. £250 ono – bargain!?! Tel: 01296 81906.

● UK Super NES games for sale includes ISS, WWF, NBA Jam, Flashback and more. Good condition. Great prices. Tel: 0181 556 5225, after 4pm.

● SNES games for sale: Lethal Enforcers, S Bomberman 2, DKC (UK), £20 each. Zombies & Super Metroid £15 each. Tel: Peter 0181 691 0147.

● Philips CDi for sale with eight CDs, includes Four Weddings & a Funeral, Burn Cycle, also DV cartridge. All for £250 (one month old) includes guarantee. Tel: 0181 523 7243.

● Super NES (SCART), five games, two joypads, programmable joystick, top of the range converter, boxed in top condition with loads of magazines. Worth £400+, sell for £130 ono. Tel: Tom 0114 230 5130.

MISCELLANEOUS SALES

● For Sale! 50 3.5 inch disks, £10. Includes labels. Tel: Matthew on 0181 523 8058 (day) or 0973 301 882 (eves).

● For sale. *Mean Machines* issues 15, 19, 20, 22. *Mean Machines Sega* issues 5, 7, 9, 10, 14-17, 22. *Sega Magazine* 1-6. *Mega* issues 3, 4, 11-18 and Gold – £3 each, £5 for 2, £40 the lot or swap for Shining Force 9 or Landstalker (Mega Drive). Tel: 0181 310 2765. Tel: 0181 310 2765, ask for Chuck.

● Issues 1, 3, 6-8, 10-14, 16-26, 30 of *Super Play*. The lot for £40. Please call after 5pm and ask for Robert. Tel: 01203 302043.

● SNES tips book – 1000s of tips & cheats for 100s of games. Send cheque or PO for £5.50 (payable to G Sands) 3 Havencrest Drive, Leicester LE5 2AJ, or ring Phil on 0860 231272 for more info.

● Anime Fans! I have over 600 titles for sale or swap. No time wasters! For details phone Mark on 01604 881 805.

● *TOTAL!* issues 8-27 for sale. Good cond, £45. Also *N-Force* issue 2, £1.50. Tel: 0114 286 3543, ask for Mark.

● Mags for sale, *Super Play* 1-31 & Gold, in mint condition (£40). *NMS* 1-30 (£35) & *Super Action* 1-21. Tel: 01463 236631, ask for Chris.

● Comics for sale! For a list of titles send 10p and SAE to Jon Bayley, 235 Coalway Road, Penn, Wolverhampton, W. Mids, WV3 7NG.

WANTED

● FFIII (GB & SNES), SSFII, Multi-player games & tap, decent RPGs. *Manga SFII* Iss 3,4, anime. Plus also people to buy or swap my games, prices from £4. Tel: Joe 0181 462 6838, after 4pm.

● SNES games wanted urgently: Sim City (UK version), Donkey Kong (UK). Phone 0181 699 6842, ask for Ann or Jeremy.

● Real bad. Super SFII, Alien 3 or any R-Type games. Mario World also wanted. Pay anything up to £20. Tel: 0121 422 2132.

● Wanted R'n'R Racing, Shadowrun, Sunset Riders and Super Parodius. Will swap for one of the following: Micro Machines, Zelda III, Dragon JP2, Mystical Ninja, Primal Rage or Flashback, must be UK versions, you must be prepared to send first. Tel: 0181 443 5629, ask for Will.

● Wanted: Manga vids, Legend of the Overfiend and Legend of the Demon Womb also fist of the North Star. Contact Shaun on 0181 965 4645 after 6pm Mon-Fri.

● Breath of Fire, Mana, Mystic Quest and other RPGs. Also NES convertor wanted for the SNES. Call after 5pm Tel 01203 302043.

● Wanted: Final Fantasy Legend and Final Fantasy Legend II on the Game Boy. Phone Rob on 01202 694120.

● Wanted: Desert Strike (UK). Will pay £25. Must be in a good condition. Please ring after 6.00pm. Tel 01433 631318, ask for Stephen or Andrew.

● I want an original SNES pad. I'll pay £6. I want an Action Replay 2 or 3. I want RPGs. I want a convertor to play NES games on the SNES. Tel 01203 302043.

● I want a Tri-Star or Hornby Superdeck. I also need Zelda 1 & 2 on the NES. They must have box and manual. I want a Game Boy for £15. Tel 01203 302043.

● I want ISS or the Deluxe version. I also want SSFII. I have swaps including DKC and Wolfenstein waiting. Tel 01203 302043.

GAMES FOR SALE

● SNES games: Starwing £7, DKC £25, Bubsy £15, Zelda £15, 11 NES games & adaptor £45. Swap everything above & money for an Amiga 1200. Tel: 01483 272394.

● Quality games for sale! Boxed with instructions, mostly rated 80%+. Too many to list, incl DKC, Stunt Race, Cybernator, FFII, Soul Blazer & other brill RPGs. Prices from £4. Call for details. Offers? Swap for games, anime or even manga. Joe, after 4pm please. Adios for now. Tel: 0181 462 6838.

● Loads of games for sale or swap incl DKC, Megaman X, Syndicate, Jungle Strike and loads of others. Tel: Alex 01278 781602.

● SNES games for sale – Shadowrun, Vortex, Stunt Race FX, Actraiser II, Mystical Ninja, NBA Jam. Tel: Charlie 01935 822620, after 6pm for prices.

● Games! All US versions, Donkey Kong Country, Starfox, Space Megaforce, Datel programmable converter. All boxed with instructions. Also Final Fight (US), no instructions and SN programmable joystick (UK). Offers to Tom on 0114 230 5130.

● Hello! UK SNES games, Sim City £15, Utopia £15, Populous £10, Zelda £9. Swap all for US FFIII & adaptor. Phone me on 01598 163315.

● US SNES games for sale, Secret Of Evermore £42, Earthbound £37, p&p inc. Tel: Simon 01363 773023, Tuesday eve only.

● SNES game for sale, Secret Of Evermore (US version) £50. Tel: 0113 279 6089, after 3pm (Leeds).

● UK SNES games: NBA Jam £15, Zool £12, Out To Lunch £10, Super Turrican £10, Super Turrican 2 £20, Vortex £12, Striker £10. Swaps considered. Tel: 0114 233 0901.

● SFII Turbo (US) £30, Slam Masters Wrestling (US) £15, SMK (US) £15, DKC (UK) £30, MKII (UK) £25 for sale. Tel: 01753 547452, after 5pm, ask for Tommy.

● Great SNES games for sale – Chrono Trigger £65, Turtles in Time £30. Both US, boxed & in great condition. Tel: 01484 646952 and ask for Leon.

● RPGs for sale. Secret Of Evermore £40, Earthbound £35, Illusion of Gaia £25. All are US versions and as new. Some Mega CD & PC CD ROM RPG titles are also for sale. Tel: 01442 69378.

● SNES RPGs: Secret Of Evermore £40, Lufia £30, Spike McFang £15, Earthbound £30 (all US), Illusion of Time £20 (UK). Tel 0117 959 1785.

● Jap and US games: Mystic Quest, Prince of Persia, Mortal Kombat, Mystical Ninja, Starfox (all US £15-20). Axelay, F-Zero, Valken (all Jap £15). Tel 01703 610202 after 4pm. Ask for Simon.

MESSAGES AND EVENTS

● Hi, my name's Toby and I'm looking for a female penpal between 14-17. I like music, videos, manga (especially Dragon Ball) and SNES. Toby Nanakhorn, 30 Denmark Villas, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 3TE.

● I need players for a postal game. It's great fun, so to find out how to play write to Stewart Leary, Flat 424, Charter House, Charter Place, Watford WD1 2RT.

● My apologies, sorry to all the guys who sent me their letters because I was in emergency case and the letters were nearly terminated, so I hope you forgive me if you like to write to me again please do it. And I'm still looking for new penpals. I'm 20 age male. Ehsan Saeed, PO Box 959, Khitan 83001, Kuwait.

● Locker, you bottom burp! Stop playing Doom and come to the pub for a pint or eight of Carling Premier! From Dazerelli.

● Funky, romantic & beautiful girls (aged 17-22) who would like to write to a handsome UAE student (aged 22) in Kuwaiti background. Just write to Abdulla Kazim, PO Box 19370, Khitan 83804, Kuwait.

FANZINES

● Role Call – RPG fanzine covering imports on all machines, run by FFIII obsessives. 24 pages (full-sized A4), four issues out now – £7 sub (six issues) or £1.20 each, postage inclusive. Write to Rachel Ryan, 25 Oakdene Ave, Woolston, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4NU. Tel: 01925 490910.

● *Retrogamer* issue 2. Featuring Nintendo in the Arcades, Ultimate Specrum games before Rare, Manic Miner: Matthew Smith. Send your £1 to Keith Ainsworth, 52 Kingfield Rd, Orrell Park, Liverpool L9 3AW.

● To get *Super Nintendo +*, the fanzine that is packed full of reviews, cheats, tips, codes & much, much more, send £1.50 and SAE to Oliver Gryce, 113 Sunny Gardens Road, Hendon, London NW4 1SH.

● *Entity*... The skiffy fanzine. SF, fantasy & horror, short fiction, articles & readers only PBM wargame. First issue out now, send 40p and SSAE to: Entity, The Old Barn, Hundley Way, Charlbury, Oxon OX7 3QE.

SWAPS

● Upgraded SNES which takes English and Japanese games, full screen picture etc. Comes with five games, SCART lead & carry case etc. Swap for 3DO, Japanese version. Tel: 01753 710618.

● SNES games – Allstars, F-Zero, Cannon Fodder, Street Fighter II. I'll do 2-for-1 for Shadowrun or any other good game of yours. Tel: 01298 26921.

● I will swap my Street Fighter II with instructions for Street Racer or Lion King. Tel: 0121 471 3846, ask for Jonathan.

● Swap my SOM for Equinox or other RPG, and DKC for SSFII. Please call Martin on 01362 668111.

● I will swap all three games Syndicate, Final Fantasy Mystic Quest & Ultraman for FFIII plus converter. Tel: Derek 0141 639 3783.

● I will swap my Unirally for your NBA Jam Tournament Edition. Ask for Paul, Tel: 0131 467 3765, must live in Edinburgh.

● Wanted – Theme Park, WWF Raw or ISS Deluxe (SNES) or decent SNES games or Game Boy games or will swap for my Street Racer. Contact Keith Robertson, Lynmore, Melgum Rd, Tarland, Aberdeenshire AB34 4YL.

● Swaps. All UK. MK1, F-Zero, Jungle Book, Batman Returns & Starwing. Write to Gavin Long, 79 Riverside Court, Oxford OX1 4NQ.

● I will swap Game Boy & Kirby's Pinball Land for SNES Pallette adaptor. Tel: 01802 184479 (Essex area).

● International Superstar Soccer Deluxe (UK Pal version) for swap. Will accept 3000 Esso Tiger Tokens ono. Will accept Football for swap for 2000 Esso Tiger Tokens ono. Phone 01988 402227 and ask for Bob or write to me at 15 Lochancroft Lane, Wigtown, Newton Stewart DG8 9HZ.

● Will swap Starwing, DKC, Cool Spot or Lion King for Street Racer, Earthworm Jim or Clayfighter 1/2. Tel: 01162 374401.

● Super Nintendo players game exchange now operating, large selection, top titles. Tel: 01707 268285 anytime.

● Has anyone got Earthworm Jim on the Game Boy? I'm willing to swap any two games out of Wario, Donkey Kong '94, Allstar 2, Darkwing Duck & the two-player lead, for any one of those games. Tel: 01902 671432.

● I will swap my F-Zero (UK) for your Action Replay or Universal Adaptor. Tel 01449 677263.

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IRRESPONSIBLE pictures

Many reviewers for Super Play don't feel right in the Gamera-The Atomic Turtle outfit we insist they wear while they watch the videos. But hey, it makes us laugh.

GIANT ROBO Part One

PG

Manga Video

58 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £5.99

The pursuit of a black attache case may seem trivial, but consider these cases (sorry) of contemporary cases... Many a famous briefcase has signalled grave things for the state of the nation. Witness for example the tatty offering waved about by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. And consider the devastation and trauma which would arise were Paddington Bear to lose his briefcase and so starve to death being deprived of his marmalade sandwiches... Consider these and know that the black attache case in question here has infinitely more sinister and severe consequences...

Despite the fact that Earth is now a clean and lovely place to live, thanks to Dr Shizuma's "Shizuma Drive", the eco-friendly and quite infeasible, renewable and recyclable universal power source, evil in the form of the Big Fire organisation is the poisonous cloud threatening to rain its mischief all over civilisation. Fortunately the Experts of Justice and the impossibly enormous and powerful Giant Robo are on hand to intervene and save the day.

With fighting, swearing, strange energy forces and sources, eco-awareness, buddy-buddy moments, and loads of amusing characters, you'd be cleverer than me if you manage to follow it first time round without recourse to the recap button on your vid! There's so much crammed in to this hour of eco-action, but there's plenty intrigue and mystery left over to make sure you hanker after the further six monthly episodes planned by Manga.

Rather disappointingly, the formidable Giant Robo doesn't feature greatly in this episode, but you can rest assured that the diverse personalities of the Experts of Justice more than make up for this. It's beautifully animated, with some interesting musical scores ranging from the unintrusive to the outright operatic. Watch out for further instalments...

Alison Harper

7 out of 10

ZERAM

18

Manga Live

97 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £13.99

Zeram doesn't talk. Zeram has a tiny demonic doll face embedded in his head that pops out and bites people. Zeram knows nothing but killing. Zeram is coming to Earth.

Lucky for us then that top sassy bounty hunter Iria and her computerised buddy Bob are waiting for him with a foolproof trap. But hey, we're only ten minutes into the movie and we know everything's definitely not going to go to plan.So it's no surprise then, that when two power company employees find themselves trapped with Zeram in Iria's Zone trap (cunningly created to look like a normal town but without the people), this looks like a bounty she just might not collect.

Don't you just love Japanese live-action? What they lack in big-budget state-of-the-art visuals they more than make up for in bizarre ideas and off-the-wall characters. Yuko Moriyama's hard as nails, tooled-up-to-the-hilt Iria is more than a match for Sigorney Weaver (and better looking too) as she battles to rescue the hapless engineers, while the evil one himself is as silent and nasty a villain (with a top line in viscous goo) as you'd hope for. The only thing that stops this being as good a romp as the best Hong Kong supernatural flicks are the sometimes stilted direction (something that the dubbing doesn't help at all) and the so-called 'comic' banter from the hapless engineers which could do with either being a) not there at all, or b) a lot more over the top.

Sure, Zeram's creators have been watching Aliens a little too much, but who cares when the result is this much fun. As usual a Godzilla-sized tongue firmly embedded in the cheek is a vital requirement for watching, but bearing that in mind *Zeram* is definitely recommended. Can we have *Zeram 2*, very quickly please Manga.

Wil Overton

7 out of 10

MAD BULL 34 #1 Scandal

18

Manga Video

48 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £9.99

The area served by New York's 34th Precinct is the dirtiest, scummiest, most low-down grubby and corrupt place in the world, filled from slime-covered wall to slime-covered wall with each and every form of undesirable imaginable.

The biggest man in blue on the block is Mad Bull – or "Sleepy" to his close colleagues – a hulk of a man with not only a physique chiselled from granite but a brain composed of the stuff, too. He's a loud, coarse bloke because New York is a loud, coarse place, and his approach is not so much shoot first, ask questions later, as shoot everyone everywhere ever.

Our tale begins as Diazaboro, a young, naive cop newly arrived at 34th Precinct, meets his new partner – and who do you think that might be? Yes, it's Mr Bull. We join them as they set out about their work on da sticky streets of New Yoik and along the way just about every cop film cliché in the book is used and abused – there's a grocery store robbery, a hostage situation, a car crash involving the two leads, a cop-in-the dock courtroom trial, a showdown on a moving underground train and even more besides.

I was expecting something to compare with *Riding Bean*, but *Mad Bull* is a shoddy, tacky, tawdry example of how not to do a cop story. Its action sequences are preposterously far-fetched (and unnecessarily graphic in places), it lacks any humour, and its storyline and dialogue dredge new depths, even for a Manga title. At least its crapness offers a few mirth-inducing moments, my favourite coming when Diazaboro protests to his partner: "Hey Sleepy, you're supposed to be a police officer on duty – you can't go around robbing hookers!".

The worst example of anime in the UK.

Tony Mott

1 out of 10

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Tony Mott

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IP NEWS LINE

Save Our Screens!

Although it's not something that SNES-only owners will have a lot of use for, those with access to one of those fiddly computer type thingies will have no doubt at sometime come across a 'screen saver'. For the uninitiated, these little gems of software kick in after you've left your system idle for a while and add some activity to the screen to stop the static image burning itself into the tube. To be honest, you'd have to leave something on your screen for a long, long time before it left an imprint but that hasn't stopped a fair few software companies making mucho cash out of novelty savers like The Simpsons (have Homer wander across your monitor and mumble 'ummmm beer') and Peanuts (have Snoopy wander across your monitor and mumble... well nothing actually). You do, of course, know where this is all leading. Anime screen savers are here and not 'Japanese, incompatible, expensive and not available here' ones, but 'US produced, PC and Mac on one disc' ones. American company Software Sculptors have four dual format CD savers available (which of course will run happily on UK PCs and Macs), so take your pick from Bubblegum Crisis, Project A-Ko, Ranma1/2 and Tenchi Muyo. Each disc has between 100 and 200 video clips and the Tenchi saver has over an hour's worth of footage. As for getting them in the UK, you could do worse than to try Otaku Ltd. who we plugged last issue.

Ranma says: "Remember, pouring hot water over your PC is dangerous, kids."

Pioneer is a Hazard

We may have thought the Pioneer Anime was going slightly off the rails with *Armitage III* last month (although we're assured the series picks up speed in its subsequent episodes), but their recent Japanese TV series *El Hazard* is definitely a return to form, should you go for the particularly colourful fantasy worlds (like *Tenchi Muyo*) that Pioneer do so well. In fact *El Hazard* shares some of Tenchi's creators.

As is so often the case in these things, it's a couple of highschool kids who start the ball rolling. Makato Mizuhara and his arch rival Jinnai Katsuhiko find themselves, along with their over-the-top history teacher Mr Fujisawa, unexpectedly transported to the Magnificent World Of El-Hazard (sounds reasonable) where they are caught up in the struggle of Hazard's human population against the insectoid Bugrom for the Eye of God, a terrible weapon that can only be operated by the twin princesses of Roshataria. Makato soon learns that the reason he's been summoned is that one of the princesses is missing and much to his embarrassment he's a dead ringer for her! And that's only one of the mad twists *El Hazard*'s got in store.

Don't ever, *EVER* become a Japanese highschool student.

The series is already going through an American release and, although not officially announced yet, there's no reason why we shouldn't be seeing *Hazard* here in the UK sometime in the Spring.

INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

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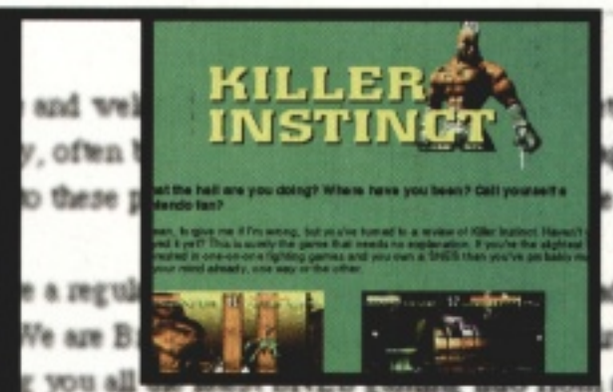
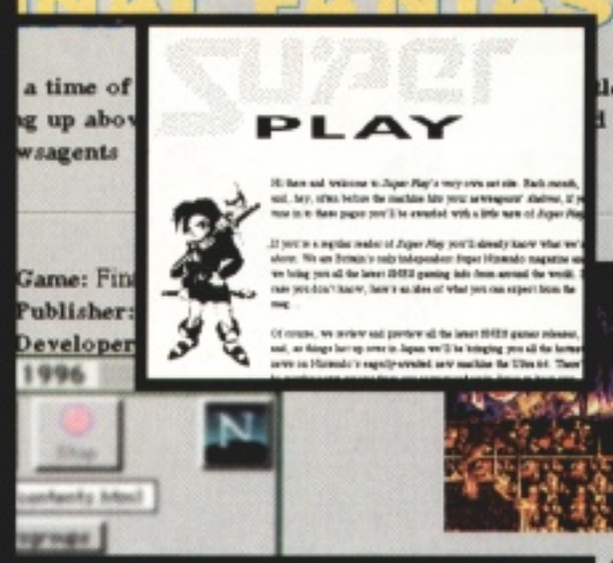
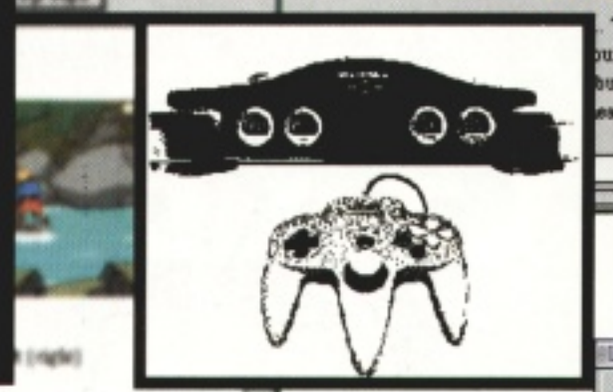
As if we didn't have enough to do already, those upstairs at Future Publishing seem to think that this Internet lark is a pretty neat idea and have given us even more work (but, you'll note, not more pay) to do by putting your favourite Nintendo magazine on the hip and happening World Wide Web.

Should you have the technonecessaries to hook up to the so-called medium of the Future, then why not visit the *Super Play* site located on that super service station of the Information Super Highway known as Futurenet.

Indulge in special tasters of forthcoming issues! Rejoice in sifting through a selection of back issue material. Meet the team. And even send us e-mails. There's loads to read, but, cunningly, not enough to stop you from going out and buying the paper version of *Super Play* every month! Find out more at the address below...







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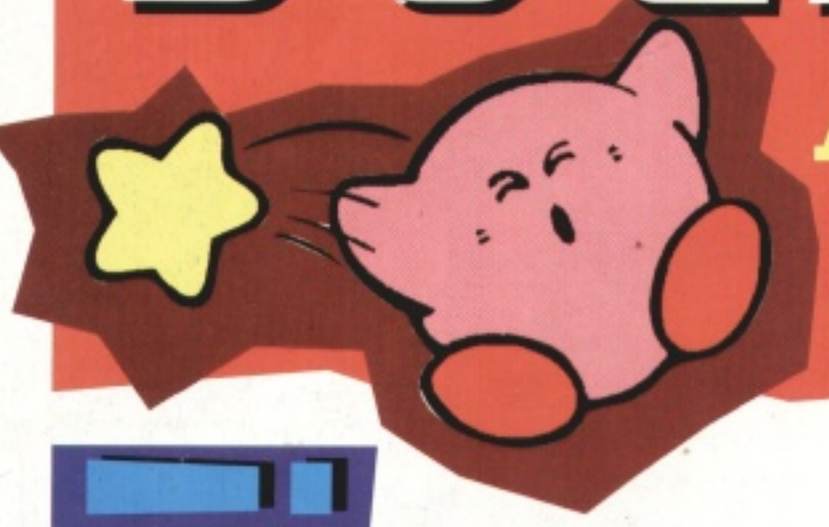
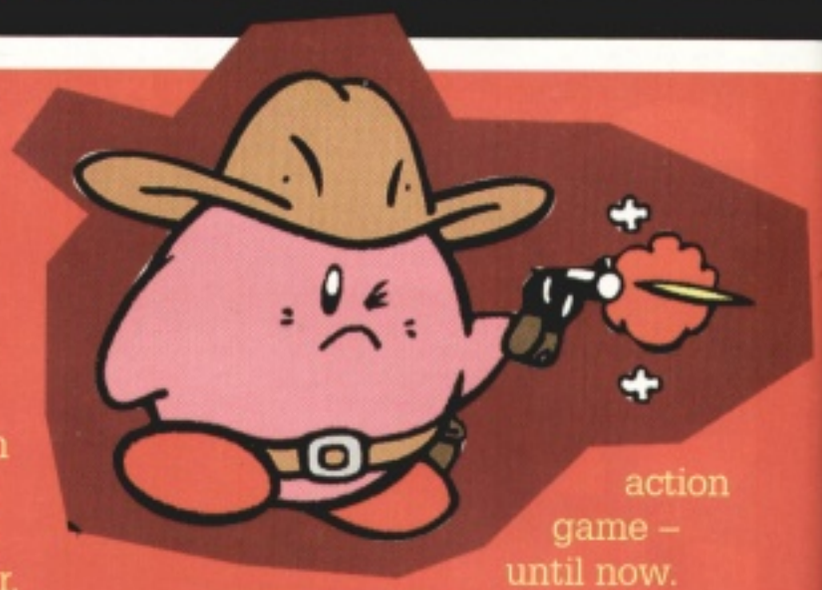
SUCK!





Although he made an appearance in the Western version of *Super Puyo Puyo* last year, the Kirbster has never been free to suck and blow his way through a 16-bit action game – until now.

The baby of Nintendo and Hal Laboratories, *Kirby Deluxe* will be reviewed within these pages in around 30 days time.

SMACK!

They've been a long time coming – two-and-a-half years, in fact – but Haggar and his cronies are just about ready to take to the streets once more in what's likely to be the, erm, final Final Fight, *Final Fight Tough*.

BANG!

The Super Bomberman series has been a mixed bag so far – will the *fourth* instalment continue to water down the original experience or will Hudson Soft finally get it just right? We'll be taking an early peak next ish.

AND!

- Reviews of *Mega Man X3*, *PGA Tour '96* and *Cutthroat Island*, and more...
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BONUS!

The *Super Play* top 100 SNES games ever revealed! From *Axelay* to *Yoshi's Island* we'll be giving you the definitive guide to the best Super Nintendo games since its birth.

ISSUE 41 MARCH 1996

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